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                   UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
                     NORTHERN DISTRICT OF OHIO
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                         WESTERN DIVISION
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    OLD GRANITE DEVELOPMENT, ) Docket No. 3:06CV2950
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    LTD.,
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              Plaintiff, ) Toledo, Ohio
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                             ) May 20, 2008
              v.
                          ) Jury Trial
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    CITY OF TOLEDO,
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              Defendant. )
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                TRANSCRIPT OF JURY TRIAL, VOLUME 1
                BEFORE THE HONORABLE JACK ZOUHARY
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                  UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE
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    APPEARANCES:
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    Proceedings recorded by mechanical stenography, transcript
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    produced by notereading.
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THE COURT: The record should reflect that we are back in court, counsel present, jury not yet brought into the courtroom.

Yesterday afternoon we completed a jury view. I will file, this morning, a brief outline of highlights from that jury view.

I also want to confirm on the record this morning, my ruling last Friday on wetlands and granting the defendant's motion in limine with respect to the wetlands. I reviewed the deposition testimony, and it does comport with representations by defense counsel. There will be an order that will be filed this morning on that issue as well.

I'm also confirming my ruling of last week with respect to testimony from other property owners, and there will be an order on file supplementing my ruling last Friday on that as well. There was an oral motion raised by defense counsel with respect to the taking claim. Counsel provided The Court with two cases. I did not receive anything from plaintiff's counsel in opposition or response to those cases. Nonetheless, I will file an order this morning that will delay that motion in limine for the reasons set forth in the order. Succinctly stated, I do not believe that the arguments raised by defense counsel are germane to the taking claim in this case and that the

case citations are not applicable to the taking claim in this case. I believe that summarizes and completes ruling on all pending motions.

I also want to indicate that I discussed with counsel yesterday afternoon time limits for opening, and I'm granting them each up to 25 minutes, and that I will indicate to counsel a two-minute warning if they approach that time limit so that you know your time is soon to be expiring. I know that there has been a history in this case of vigorous and appropriate representation of your respective clients. That's fine. I caution counsel during the course of this trial to avoid any digs against opposing counsel, to keep your discourse civil, and to keep your comments and questions directed toward me and not each other.

Anything further from counsel for either side?

MR. ROBON: Your Honor, I indicated off the

record I intended to call Judy Seibenick from Hospice, and

Your Honor's ruling about other flooding prohibits that,

but I would proffer that her testimony would be that as

follows: Number one, that Hospice of Northwest Ohio, Inc.,

which is one of the adjacent property owners, did not

receive any notice, either written or verbal, about the

installation of the public facility of the city water main.

They had no advanced notice before the trees were cut that

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anything was going to happen to the rear of their property, that subsequent to the installation of the city water main Hospice experienced substantial flooding, also the W. W. Knight Preserve, which is next door, experienced substantial flooding, and the city did come out and put a swail in to divert the water down towards Bates Road.

The evidence eventually is going to be that the topography of the area is that the Hospice land and the W.W. Knight Preserve are higher than the Cambridge subdivision, and a portion of that water is now on the back of the Cambridge subdivision.

THE COURT: I'm not sure how she can tell or testify as a layperson where the water is coming and going. With respect to the issue of notice, there's been no document filed to date with The Court that would indicate that notice was required or that notice was or was not given. As I indicated off the record, it seems to me that those issues with respect to notice are easily ascertainable outside the testimony of someone like this who is not directly involved with the property or this lawsuit and can easily be shown through either records or official documents or testimony from some official.

And with respect to flooding on someone else's property, as I indicated last week, without connecting the flooding there with the flooding on this property, that

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would be pure speculation for the jury, and there needs to
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     be a connector, either expert or otherwise, that can do
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     that, and that has not been shown to The Court.
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               Anything further from defense counsel or
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    plaintiff's counsel?
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               MR. ROBON: Are you going to have a separation of
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     witnesses, because one of my witnesses is here?
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               THE COURT: Yes, The Court will order a
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     separation of witnesses. What that means is, anyone who's
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     expected to testify in this case must remain outside the
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     courtroom until it is his or her time to testify. Party
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     representatives are excused from that order, and I also ask
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     counsel, since you know who your witnesses are and I don't,
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     to monitor that order and make sure that your witnesses do
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     remain close at hand.
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               MR. BAHRET: Your Honor, when you say "party
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     representatives," I'm assuming each side has one
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     representative?
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                           That's correct.
               THE COURT:
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               MR. BAHRET: They have two sitting there.
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               MR. ROBON:
                           They are both owners, Your Honor,
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     50/50. And I think it would be highly prejudicial if the
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     two owners of the limited liability company could not sit
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     in because they perform different functions. Mr --
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                           It's like a corporation. It seems to
               THE COURT:
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me you have a corporation with a multitude of owners and 1 2 officers, and there's only one designated representative. 3 MR. ROBON: I've never had that happen in --4 THE COURT: In a corporation, a corporation. 5 MR. ROBON: A limited liability company, Your 6 Honor, so partnership. And partners have always been 7 allowed to sit in trial. And particularly this case, 8 because Mr. Laskey was the money person and was the 9 marketing person, and Mr. Taylor was the contractor who did 10 all the installation and things of that nature. 11 THE COURT: Well, aside from their differing 12 roles, the issue is, are they entitled to more than one 13 representative? 14 MR. BAHRET: Your Honor, with all due respect to 15 Mr. Robon, but I've never seen it not done where they're 16 separated. It's a corporation. It's an LLC, it's a form 17 of a legal entity. 18 THE COURT: It would be like a law firm LLC. And 19 if there was a law firm who was a party, would you have 20 more than one, quote, unquote, partner at the table? 21 Well, I can tell you we were sued for MR. ROBON: 22 malpractice and there were three partners sitting at the 23 table for -- across the street with Judge Skow several 24 years ago, never was an issue. 25 And I think in this case where both of them have

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signed a $2 million loan, to exclude one of them from the
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     proceedings would be highly prejudicial.
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               MR. BAHRET: Your Honor, the signing of the loan
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     is irrelevant. It's a legal entity. They're entitled to
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     have one representative and only one. I can't bring in
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    multiple tax payers to sit here with me.
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               THE COURT:
                           Well --
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               MR. ROBON:
                          Well, you have representatives from
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     the law department here.
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               MR. BAHRET: They're not witnesses, though,
            You can bring all the people that love Old Granite
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     in here that you want as long as they're not witnesses.
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               THE COURT:
                           It was my understanding that --
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               MR. ROBON:
                          Mr. Taylor --
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               THE COURT:
                           Thank you. Mr. Taylor was not going
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     to be here during the entire trial, in any event?
               MR. ROBON:
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                          That's correct.
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               THE COURT: He's only going to be here for
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    portions of the trial.
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               MR. ROBON: He wasn't here yesterday, for the
    record.
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               THE COURT: It seems to me that Mr. Laskey has
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     led the bulk of the efforts on behalf of the plaintiff in
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     this case, and Mr. Laskey was here yesterday. He's been at
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     the pretrial hearing. Seems to me that Mr. Laskey can
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continue to be the representative for the plaintiff, and 1 2 Mr. Taylor, since he will be in and out, I will ask that he 3 remain out when he is not testifying. 4 MR. ROBON: My only other concern for The 5 Court -- and this is kind of an embarrassing matter for 6 Mr. Laskey. He is very, very hard of hearing, and I found that out during depositions when he was questioned. 7 8 THE COURT: We have headphones. He can use them. 9 As long as people are using the mics, he'll be able to pick 10 it up. We have those for jurors as well. If there's any 11 other party representative that would like one, you're 12 welcome to it. 13 MR. BAHRET: Further on the point of the 14 corporate representative, I know you've already ruled, but 15 just for purposes of the record, Mr. Laskey was at almost 16 all of the discovery depositions. Mr. Taylor was at zero. 17 MR. WATKINS: On another subject, I don't know if 18 The Court wants this addressed right now, but I have a 19 brief statement about the jury instructions that was given. 20 THE COURT: About the instructions that were 21 given yesterday? 22 MR. WATKINS: Well, what wound up, yes, what 23 wound up happening is plaintiff's counsel did submit proposed instructions, and to the extent that they had 24 25 asked for instructions, and on the instructions they had

asked for that we objected to, counsel was kind enough to put under those instructions "defendant objects to this request." What didn't happen, though, was any listening by plaintiff's counsel in that filing of the requests that defendant has made, so we separately filed them yesterday --

THE COURT: Well --

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MR. WATKINS: -- is long with -- I mean, we had previously filed some, but we withdrew some after we spoke with counsel, but they're both a matter of record.

THE COURT: Well, the record can reflect that the trial order in this case required a joint-proposed jury instruction. The Court did not receive that. And in discussions with counsel last week, asked that they put their heads together. The Court was on the understanding it would receive those Sunday. They were not received Sunday, and they were not received Monday. And today is Tuesday. I'm going ahead today, and I'm preparing a draft of proposed jury instructions along with proposed jury interrogatories, which I will share with counsel, and I've already said enough about The Court's disappointment in having what it felt would be an appropriate launching pad for The Court to work with with respect to those interrogatories and instructions. Nonetheless, we're plowing ahead, and I hope to have something for you if not

at the end of the day today, certainly first thing tomorrow morning for you to review.

The Court should also indicate -- and I believe we confirmed this last week -- that there was a witness that the plaintiff intended to call, and it was a late-in-the-game disclosure with no opportunity for the defendant to learn about that witness' testimony, and therefore, again, pursuant to the long-standing trial order of this case, The Court granted the defendant's request to exclude that witness.

I'm done. Anything further from either side? If not, are we ready for the jury.

Carol?

Good morning. You may be seated.

(Jury brought in at 8:30 a.m.)

THE COURT: We had some more logistical intellectual interviews which we're still working on, but hopefully we're up and running. You'll find on your chairs some preliminary jury instructions which I'll ask you to turn over. I'm going to read and ask you to follow along with me.

Those who participate in a trial must do so in accordance with established rules. This is true of the witnesses, the lawyers and The Judge. It is equally true of you as jurors. The lawyers present the evidence

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according to the rules; The Judge enforces the rules and determines what evidence may be admitted. It is the duty of the Judge to instruct you on the law, and it is your duty to follow the law as I will state it to you, both now and at the conclusion of all the evidence.

The trial procedure is as follows: First, the lawyers offer in their own opening statements what the evidence will be. Then plaintiffs offer its evidence.

Next the defendant may offer evidence. Then the plaintiff may present a rebuttal. The trial concludes with closing arguments by the lawyers and the final instructions of law from me, after which you will retire to deliberate on a verdict.

It is your exclusive duty to decide all questions of fact submitted to you. In connection with this duty, you must determine the effect and value of evidence. You must not be influenced in your decision by sympathy, prejudice, or passion toward any party, witness, or lawyer in the case.

If in these instructions or in the instructions that I will give you at the conclusion of the evidence, any principal or idea is repeated or stated in varying ways, no emphasis is intended, and none must be inferred by you. Therefore, you must not single out any particular sentence or individual point or instruction and ignore the others,

but rather, you are to consider all of the evidence instructions as a whole and are to consider each instruction in relation to all of the other instructions.

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The fact that I give you some of the instructions now and some at the conclusion of the evidence has no significance as to their relative importance, nor does the order in which I give you the instructions.

Lawyers for the party will of course have active roles in and make objections. Remember that lawyers are not witnesses, and since it is your duty to decide the case solely on the evidence that you see or hear in the case, you must not consider as evidence statements of the lawyers. There is an exception, and that is if the lawyers agree to any fact. Such agreement, we call it a "stipulation" or "admission," will be brought to your attention, and it will then be your duty to regard such fact as being conclusively proved without the necessity of further evidence.

If a question is asked and an objection to the question is sustained, you will then not hear the answer, and you must not speculate as to what the answer might have been or the reason for the objection. If an answer is given to a question and The Court then grants a motion to strike out the answer, you are to completely disregard such question and answer and not consider them for any purpose.

A question, in and of itself, is not evidence, and may be considered by you only as it supplies meaning to the answer.

During the course of the trial certain testimony may be read into evidence from a written transcript or shown to you by a video. This testimony has been taken under oath before trial and typed up into a booklet for use by the lawyers. This testimony, known as a deposition, is to be considered by you the same as if all such questions and answers were given here in The Court from the witness stand.

As jurors, you have the sole and exclusive duty to decide the credibility of the witnesses who will testify in this case, which simply means that it is you who must decide whether to believe or disbelieve a particular witness. In determining these questions, you will apply the tests of truthfulness that you apply in your daily lives. These tests include the appearance of each witness on the stand; his or her manner of testifying; the reasonableness of the testimony; the opportunity he or she had to see, hear, and know the things concerning which he or she testified; his or her accuracy of memory; frankness or lack of it; intelligence; interest and bias, if any; together with all the facts and circumstances surrounding the testimony.

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Applying these tests, you will assign to the testimony of each witness such weight as you deem proper. You are not required to believe the testimony of any witness simply because it was given under oath. You may believe or disbelieve all or any part of the testimony of any witness.

You should not decide any issue of fact merely on the basis of the number of witnesses who testify on each side of an issue. Rather, the final test in judging evidence should be the force and weight of the evidence regardless of the number of witnesses on each side of an issue. The testimony of one witness believed by you is sufficient to prove any fact.

Also, any discrepancies in a witness' testimony or between his or her testimony and that of others does not necessarily mean that you should disbelieve the witness, as people commonly forget facts or recollect them erroneously after the passage of time. You are certainly aware that two persons who witness the same incident may often see or hear it differently. In considering a discrepancy in testimony, you should consider whether such discrepancy concerns an important fact or a trivial one.

An expert witness is one who, through study or experience or both, has acquired skill that makes him or her better qualified than the average person to form an

opinion. For example, parties may choose to have an engineer testify as to the drain pipe and what role, if any, it may have played in any flooding or to testify as to the boundary lines between the trees and vegetation were removed, or how plaintiff's property may have been damaged, if you find defendant at fault.

This does not mean, however, that you are to consider yourselves bound by the opinion of any expert. Where expert opinions are in conflict, it is for you, as tryers of fact, to determine which is the more worthy of belief. In such event, as with all witnesses, in determining what is the greater weight of the evidence, you should not content yourselves with a mere counting of the number of witnesses, but should consider relative qualifications, credibility, and believability.

This concludes my preliminary instructions.

We're now ready for the opening statements of counsel. I remind you these statements are not evidence but rather an opportunity for the lawyers to tell you what they believe the evidence will be in support of their respective positions.

Yesterday Mr. Robon indicated that Mr. Taylor, one of the partners with Mr. Laskey in Old Granite, would be here during the trial, and he will be here during the trial during his testimony, however, he will not be present

during the entire trial, so I bring that to your attention 1 2 based on a ruling that The Court made. And with that, we 3 are ready for plaintiff's opening. 4 MR. ROBON: Thank you, Your Honor. 5 Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. 6 A trial in a civil case is a search for the truth 7 and a reconstruction of what's happened, whether it's an 8 accident case --9 Excuse me, Marve, I'm sorry. You can THE COURT: 10 see what happens when the mic's not working, and for our 11 court reporter as well as me and the jury to hear you --12 MR. ROBON: Speak up. 13 Either speak up or be close to a mic. THE COURT: 14 We have a portable mic, okay, if you want, but I'll leave 15 those options up to you. 16 If I can use the portable mic. MR. ROBON: 17 The opening statement gives us an opportunity as 18 attorneys to give you what we call a snapshot or a preview 19 of the evidence. Now, yesterday you saw the subdivision. 20 That's not evidence. That's just what's there, what we 21 have and what we're going to introduce into evidence today 22 or tomorrow or the next day. 23 This is an overhead aerial taken by the county of the river, River Road, which is a very exclusive -- very 24 25 wealthy people live there in mansions, I guess, is a good

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way to put it. This here is the Cambridge subdivision, and this here was the greenery that was along the railroad tracks. This was taken in 2006 prior to the excavation and the clearing of the trees. And this shows, from Bates Road, which is where the bus took you up here and down River Road, and here all the way over to White Road and to Ford Road and the turnpike.

We have another one that's a little bit closer.

And this one -- this one here shows the Cambridge subdivision right here, and it shows Hospice is down here, the W.W. Knight Preserve here, and you will see there are two rows, one row here of trees, and then another row on the opposite side. And in between was the old Toledo terminal railroad track back in the early 1900s when they had an inter-urban track, and it's been abandoned for many, many years.

The evidence is going to show that the CSX railroad that owned and still owns that right of way -- and that's an active track behind it -- but we own both the unactive track and the active track, sold an easement to the City of Toledo for \$2.1 million so the city could install a 66-inch water main to service northern Wood County.

And one of the interesting things about this case, and one of the reasons we're in federal court, is the

city did this outside of its jurisdictional limits. This property is in Wood County. The City of Toledo doesn't extend into Wood County. It's just in Lucas County. The city makes a profit, the evidence is going to show, by selling water to Perrysburg, Rossford, Perrysburg Township, and all the municipalities in northern Wood County. They sell it at a higher rate than they charge the Toledo residents. So it was a profit making venture for the City of Toledo. In fact, the total project, we understand, is about \$50 million, not just for this 1 mile, but for the entire project, to bring the water out to northern Wood County.

Well, our evidence is going to show that there's a video taken by Ric Man Construction, which was a general contractor for the City of Toledo. And the video that you're going to see is going to show an individual in April of 2006 walking down this path right here, and he talks about I'm at station 175. I'm at station 180. Those are survey points. And you will, if you listen clearly, hear him say, My goodness, there is a subdivision back here that we didn't know anything about. And the evidence is going to show that the City of Toledo did not show that subdivision on its plans. Which, you know, they could have stayed 10 feet away from the property line, and we wouldn't be here in court rather than for the flooding, but they

didn't do that.

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The evidence is further going to show that

Ms. Soncrant drove her Jeep or some other type of

four-by-four vehicle down this road where the old track

was, saw the subdivision, but did not make any special

plans or concerns about the value of the property or what

was going to be done to it. There was no notice to any of

the property owners here that the City of Toledo was going

to come in and cut trees down that were 70, 80 feet tall

that had been growing for dozens and dozens of years, let

alone cut trees and brush and brambles on the property of

the Cambridge subdivision.

Brambles are a term that you're going to learn about. I belong to Belmont Country Club which is across right in here. And Belmont Country Club was owned by W.W. Knight, who started First National Bank here in Toledo; it's now Fifth Third Bank. And he had a hunting preserve on the Belmont Country Club up until 1964. And they planted these brambles, which were intertwined so thickly that game --

MR. BAHRET: Your Honor, Your Honor, he's testifying. There's going to be no witness coming forward to talk about that.

THE COURT: There is -- as I indicated to the jury, this is an opportunity for counsel to indicate what

the evidence will be, and it's not evidence. Whether there will be testimony about this or not, I don't know yet. I just repeat my earlier instruction that counsel's -- where this is a road map, and we'll have to wait and see what the evidence is in trial.

MR. ROBON: Thank you, Your Honor.

But the brambles are so intertwined -- and you'll see pictures of them -- that even when the leaves are off, a strip of brambles that's 4- or 5-feet wide at the base, can hang over several feet on either side and act as a total screen buffer. You'll -- you've seen it in many places when you go down the road, and you'll see condos or something and you'll see greenery that's maybe 2- or 3-feet wide. It blocks off the view of what's behind it.

In any event, the evidence is going to show that a contractor named Vermillion, which was a subcontractor of Ric Man, the city's general contractor, came in with very, very large clearing machines. Machines that had saws three or 4 feet in diameter spinning like this, and they cut every single tree and brush in front of the Cambridge subdivision.

Interestingly, when you were there yesterday, I don't know if you noticed, but down here further, they didn't cut clear up to the property line. And I think the reason was there was a chain link fence over here, so they

stayed a few feet away from it on the adjoining property owners. But the evidence is going to show that they cut everything. In addition to cutting everything, their contract required them to get rid of the stumps and the brush, they had to haul it all away, chop it up. Well, when they pulled out the brambles -- if this was a line of brambles right here between the -- you'll see the railroad's here and Cambridge is here, the roots are interconnected, and they just ripped them out. There will be pictures that you will see of the brambles that were cut. Most of it's covered up now with mud. But that's the first part of our case. And there's going to be evidence that the cutting of those trees substantially diminished the value of the lots.

And this is an overlay, bigger what is called a plat map. What did I do with my little -- the evidence is going to show that this is the CSX right of way along here. Yesterday you were on lot 15. That's where the spec house is. We went and we looked at a corner monument that was right here, if you'll recall, and then behind the corner monument was the railroad fence. The evidence is going to show by a professional surveyor that the railroad fence was off the line. It was over on our property line.

Secondly, it's going to show that the cutting took place on Cambridge property. It's going to be, I

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think, undisputed, a question of how many feet they went into the Cambridge property. But there was trees, brush, and brambles on 16, 15, 14, 13 and 12 down here, there wasn't much on the last three lots.

To compound matters, after -- and by the way, this was done like in a day's time when they came through here with this big machine, cut everything down, and left everybody agasp. There was no notice, no notices to the owners of any type that any kind of thing was going to be taking place on this railroad property. So the next thing that happened after they cut the brambles is, there's a manhole that we didn't see yesterday that is located -this is a drawing that was done by a graphic artist, done to scale, shows the subdivision. It shows the small ditch that was there, the blue is where the city water line is and then the railroad tracks. So the evidence is going to show that there was a manhole right here, just off of lot 16 on the railroad property. That manhole is a container where water runs in and then it has to run someplace. the evidence is going to show that when they were installing that water main, the cutting took place in April of 2006. The water main actually is being installed in the summer of 2006. They ran across a 24-inch drain tile right in the path of the water main.

So the engineers, the city got together and

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there's going to be some dispute between what the Wood

County engineer is going to say and the city is going to
say as to where the water's supposed to go. But in
actuality, what's happened is when they cut it, there was
no water on it because it was summer time. So they put a
bulkhead on either side of it. So right now that drain
goes no place, and it's got a 66-inch water main right in
the middle of it. So what's happening is that this
manhole, which took the water from the railroad down here
all down here behind the Cambridge subdivision -- and
actually there will be testimony from a gentleman
shortly -- over here on Bates Road, their water drained
into this manhole, and then it drained across into this
railroad ditch, and then eventually out to the Maumee
River.

The flooding compounds the devaluation or diminishment of value of the property. What the owners attempted to do initially is during construction, they said, my goodness, look at the railroad, what can we do? They brought in, I think, 100 or 140 loads of fill dirt to build up across the back, and they started on lot 16 where the tile was pointed out yesterday to some of you. You saw the tile underneath the water. Well, what they did is, they took this drain tile and tied it into this railroad drain. The problem is, the railroad drain doesn't go any

place any more because it was severed, so water just sits. 1 2 And when it gets heavy rain, the water backs up in this 3 whole area here, all the way down here. And evidence is 4 going to show that it gets up within a few feet of the 5 house -- and we have photographs of that that were taken in 6 December of 2006, including the ducks. 7 Rather than finishing and putting more fill dirt 8 in to try and block the view of the railroad, all of a 9 sudden --10 Wait a minute, you're covering up the evidence of what was cut and the property line. 11 12 So Mr. McCarthy, who is an engineer, went back. 13 And if you noticed yesterday, there was an excavation right 14 behind -- there was a mound of earth and then like a dip. That is where all the brambles were cut and exposed so that 15 16 the surveyors could see the actual lines where the property 17 was truly, and that's what Mr. Nye is going to testify 18 about today, where the property land really was. 19 The evidence is also going to show that to cure 20 this situation -- these lots right now are not saleable. 21

Nobody's going to buy a lot that looks at a railroad with water flooding in the back of it.

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To cure the water problem, the evidence is going to show that what they will have to do is put a deep trench in here. And bare in mind, this is about six or 7 feet

lower than it is out at the street. So the trench here is going to have to start about 12-feet deep. They'll have to run a trench by their own between lots 15 and 16, bore under the road, and go up here. This is a green space that the county required as part of the subdivision plan.

They'll probably have to build a retention pond, and then have it tie into the storm drain on River Road. Cost estimates are close to \$200,000 to solve that drainage problem.

The evidence is also going to show -- and by the way, we have four experts. We have an engineering expert, a surveying expert from Peterman and Associates in Findlay that's going to talk about the property line. We have an MAI appraiser. MAI appraiser is the highest appraisal status that you can have. And we also have an arborist who is going to talk about, you know, the cost of restoring some type of barrier along the back of that property so that the railroad is less visible, less noisy, less intrusive.

In this particular case, the actions by the City of Toledo constituted a trespass. They were negligent.

They -- it violated the United States laws by taking the property that they didn't own and using it. And the purpose of a trial is for us to present to you the facts and the evidence and for you to make a decision.

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If you don't believe us, you come back with \$0. If you believe us, you come back with an award that would be fair to compensate the property owners.

There's going to be a lot of testimony in this case about marketing, why the lots didn't sell right away. The subdivision was completed in late 2001, early 2002. They sold off eight lots. There are six homes here constructed, and outside of our property that the property owners own, and two other lots were sold, so eight lots total out of 22. So there's 14 lots left, including the house that is on lot 115, which is a spec house.

The evidence is going to show that since there's no money, there's no payment. The house on lot 15 is under foreclosure by First Place Bank. The developers are in default with First Federal Bank of Defiance on their \$2 million development loan. They're delinquent on the real estate taxes on all of the lots because there's no money being generated by any sales of the lots. The MAI appraiser that is going to come in is going to testify that these lots, when the trees and the barrier were cut down, were diminished in value by at least 50 percent. These lots were selling for between a hundred and a 125,000. He's come up with the price that maybe they're worth 50 or 60, maybe 70, a couple of them, still today -- which in my mind is questionable after I was out there yesterday with

the train in the back.

Interestingly, the city's appraiser has come up with a very similar value. The city's appraiser is going to testify that these lots are now worth about \$60,000. The difference is the city appraiser says they -- all the lots, with all that cutting and everything else that happened, only diminished by a total of \$20,000. Our appraiser says it's \$355,000 diminishment in value of the lots. So there's a lot of factual disputes.

I don't think the city's going to own up and tell you that they trespassed and they're sorry for it. I think they're going to dig their feet in and bite like heck and that's why we're here today. And I hope that after you hear all the evidence, use your reasoning, you'll come to the conclusion that Mr. Laskey and Mr. Taylor were harmed.

I thought Mr. Taylor was going to sit in. We're only allowed one representative from the company, so the only time he can be here is when he testifies. Mr. Laskey will be the company representative. Mr. Laskey's hard of hearing. He's got --

Do you have your head phones on?

But we hope that you will be fair, impartial,
just listen to the facts, and I think that you will
understand why we're in court here today. Thank you.

THE COURT: Thank you.

Bob?

2.2

MR. BAHRET: Thank you, Your Honor.

Good morning. It's my privilege to represent the City of Toledo in this case, and I intend to do it fairly and honestly.

You have already been given misinformation. You heard him say that nobody got any notice. Well, first of all, I don't believe notice is required, but notice was published in the newspaper long before the project. There was a public meeting held in a meeting hall for anybody that was interested, not required, but it was done.

The water main both begins and ends in the City of Toledo. It goes down the railroad right of way, and then goes under the river ending back in Toledo near the Anthony Wayne trail. So I don't know what the business about selling water to Wood County is all about. It's true the city does it, but I don't believe with that particular line. It's irrelevant in any event.

The issue here is, was Cambridge harmed by activity of the City of Toledo that took place on Cambridge property? That's key. There's no question -- I'll try to keep my voice up because I move around a little bit.

There's no question that there were trees between the abandoned railway line and the existing railway line where you saw a train yesterday. There were trees there.

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There's no question there were trees, some trees behind Cambridge. You'll see aerial views. There's no question that there were weeds and junk growing on that railway, the abandoned railway right of way where the pipe sits now. There's also no question that they needed to be removed to fit this large pipe in there, and there's no question under the law that Cambridge has no right to complain about it even if they now see the rail -- the railroad cars better than they saw them before. They don't have the right to cry foul, but they do. They don't even contend that anything was removed from Cambridge property on this half of the development. They don't even claim they trespassed down there. So obviously, they're not going to claim you can't see the train even if everything went just swimmingly great. You can see the train on this half of the development perfectly with no obstructions at all, even without a trespass. They'll have to admit that. They're down on this end, there might have still

They're down on this end, there might have still been a 3-foot or 2-foot barrier, as they call it. You will see in the preconstruction video that this development is easily seen from the abandoned right of way. You'll see it on videotape before anything was cut. There was a tree here or a tree there, but it wasn't like it's just a wall. You could see the train. You could hear the train.

You'll hear from the guy that lives in that spec

2.2

house -- free of charge by the way -- you will hear him when asked -- and when I talk to you about what you'll hear from a witness, I operate with the assumption that they'll tell you the same thing that they said at deposition. So assuming he says the same thing that he said at deposition -- and I'm sure he will -- when asked, could he hear the train before the trees were cut, he says, oh, yeah, oh, yeah. Wake them up at night repeatedly.

You'll see how close Bates Road was to that development. The trains blow their whistle as they approach Bates Road. And you can easily hear that whistle. And by the way, the train that you saw yesterday, I'm sure you noticed it was a work train. It wasn't the regular coal trains and stuff, which is why it was going that slow. Train yesterday was going about walking speed, which is not the speed the normal trains go.

What you will hear is that there was a railroad fence. In fact, during the walk through yesterday, The Judge told you there was a fence there because nobody disputes that there was a railroad fence that went all the way down, not just behind Cambridge, but goes for miles and miles.

You will hear the plaintiff's expert tell you, first of all, surveying is not an exact science. If you get three surveyors in the room, you're going to get three

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different landmarks; that's just a fact of life. They'll disagree by inches, maybe sometimes feet. It's rare when they put the marks in the same exact spot. But their expert is going to say that on a job like this, it is reasonable to give credibility to the railroad fence and just stay inside the fence. That's what the city's contractor did. Their expert will agree with ours that nobody went on the wrong side of the railroad fence. All the clearing was on the railroad side. Our experts will tell you and the contractor will tell you -- which by the way the contractor and Vermillion are no longer parts of this lawsuit. They had been, they settled. They will tell you that they need --MR. ROBON: Can we approach the bench? THE COURT: Yes, you may. (A side-bar conference was had off the record.) THE COURT: Ladies and gentlemen, there was a comment by defense counsel with respect to Vermillion having been a party to this lawsuit. I'm going to instruct you to disregard that comment as best you can. Strike it from your memory bank. That's not an issue before you, and it's not something that need concern you. You may continue. MR. BAHRET: Thank you, Your Honor.

You will hear the representative from Ric Man -- which is the name of the general contractor that installs the pipeline -- you'll hear them say that this was a tight space.

Now, you saw the abandoned right of way. That may seem like some good space, but consider you're bringing in a lot of pipe. You've got to stack the pipe, you've got to dig a big trench, you've got heavy equipment you've got to move around. This was a tight space. They needed all of it cleared to operate. And you'll hear them say that.

Again -- and I emphasize it's not actionable, even if they didn't need all the space because it's not on the Cambridge property -- but what actually -- what they did, because it was so tight in that ditch that's between the active railway and the abandoned railway -- I think some of you saw that ditch yesterday -- they were filling that as they went so they could back their equipment on it, and then as they'd move out, they'd just dig it back behind them. So it was like a moving line, that gave them an extra 10 feet or more to use. Just evidence of how tight the job was.

But on the issue of this "crossover pipe," is the terminology you'll hear, "crossover culvert," the so-called drain that went under the abandoned right of way. I didn't hear counsel tell you that they already had a problem with

ponding water before this project ever started, but the evidence will be that they did. That was a problem child for 100 years. In fact, you'll hear Mr. Laskey tell you that he consulted their engineer, this McCarthy guy, about their water problem before that drainage culvert was ever cut. That's what he said at deposition. That's what I expect he'll say again here today or whenever he testifies.

What they're claiming is that the water problem supposedly got worse, nobody can quantify it. What you'll hear their engineer that designed their own drainage system say is that in 2006 and 2007 we had some rather unusual events, floods, Findlay went under water. The rain in the summer of 2007 was a 500-year flood. The rain during 2006, I believe, was a 100-year flood. The drainage system in Cambridge was designed for a five-year flood. So they were going to have ponding, significant ponding, no matter what happened to that crossover tile.

You'll hear evidence when we talk about, oh, I can't sell a lot, this is key, they didn't sell a lot for three years before this project. Why? They couldn't get rid of the lots. Absolutely nobody bought any of these lots with their backyard touching the railroad tracks, nobody. The lots that were sold are either on the other side of the tracks -- I mean, on the other side of Jacqueline Drive or down here away from the tracks. You'll

hear the housing market absolutely went into the toilet right about the same time this project was completed.

You'll hear that Old Granite owns two other developments, and they can't sell a lot in those either. And they don't have a problem with a railroad in either of those developments. The housing market is dead. And Old Granite and Cambridge were dead before the water main was put in.

The water that you may have seen yesterday, and

you saw a little pipe in there that The Judge pointed out to you, the -- most of that water, by the way, is not on Old Granite -- or Cambridge property. In fact, here where my finger is, but that pipe -- and that's an interesting story too. Well, I didn't even know that thing was there. I found out recently. But it's intriguing because the people that are crying foul for trespass, trespassed to put that pipe in. Their expert, McCarthy, got on railroad property, knocked a hole in the side of the underground drainage culvert and put that pipe in without the railroad's permission, without the City of Toledo's permission, with no notice of anybody. And a pipe that apparently would have water in it, he puts a drain in it so the water can come out in that pond you saw. And I don't know what the engineering science behind that maneuver was, but that's what he did.

And speaking of trespass, without permission, a

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couple of days after the right of way was cleared, McCarthy engineers the truck lift. 120 or more huge tandem truck trucks of dirt are brought in on the railroad property without permission, dumped on the railroad property, and then you get a bulldozer and push it towards Cambridge.

You saw -- remember that some of you that saw the area where the fence was leaning over and there was the pin? Why do you think the fence was leaning over? They pushed it with the dirt, with tons and tons of dirt. The markings were all covered. The evidence was gone.

The survey stakes -- some of you saw a couple of survey stakes out there yesterday. Those are not the ones that were there when this job was done. That's from the resurvey that they did and the city did after this.

MR. ROBON: Your Honor, I'm going to object.

There's absolutely no evidence of that whatsoever. Those are the original pins that were put in in 2001.

THE COURT: Okay, gentlemen.

This, again, is counsel's opportunity to tell you what they believe the evidence will be. We have not heard the evidence yet. We will allow counsel to continue his representation.

MR. BAHRET: I think he misheard me. I didn't say anything about the pins. I was talking about the stakes, the wood survey -- I think they're called "lats"

technically. Those lats are not the ones that were there back at the time this job was done. They were there after the border dispute, if you want to call that. That's when it happened.

And interestingly, several of those lats are literally touching the Peterman survey and the city survey. They're touching, they're in the same spot, so they weren't really disagreeing on where the property line is. You will hear from various people about was there any encroachment here or not. In our view, the worse case scenario only applies up here and might be three or 4 inches.

And nobody claims there's anything down here removed from their property that they have the right to complain about. You'll hear from the people that are appraising these lots, and they don't take a position on encroachment. They just say because those trees were removed, the lots might be worth less now than they were then. Keep in mind, it's not actionable. It may be worth less, I don't know. But they don't have the right to cry foul because it's not on their property.

You'll remember I asked you during the jury selection process if any of you believed you have the right to complain if your neighbor cuts down his walnut tree.

You may have loved the walnut tree, you can't cry foul.

That's what this case is about. And when we're all said

and done, we believe you will be satisfied that there's no 1 2 evidence, certainly not sufficient evidence to prove that 3 anything happened to that development because of actionable 4 misconduct by the City of Toledo or any of its contractors 5 or subcontractors. 6 Thank you. 7 THE COURT: Thank you. Plaintiff may call first witness. 8 9 MR. ROBON: Thank you, Your Honor. 10 Was herein, called as if upon examination, was by 11 me first duly sworn, as hereinafter certified, and said as 12 follows. 13 DIRECT EXAMINATION BY MR. ROBON: 14 15 Would you introduce yourself to the jury, tell 16 the jury your name and where you live. 17 My name's John Sumner. I live at 30351 Bates 18 Road. I live on Bates and where the new water line they 19 put in near the railroad tracks. There's some railroad 20 tracks also. 21 So you're three or 400 feet from the Cambridge 2.2 subdivision? 23 Α. That's correct. 24 Okay. And how long have you lived in that area 25 on Bates Road?

- 1 A. All my life.
- 2 Q. And how old are you?
- 3 A. Fifty-two.
- 4 | Q. And you brought us some pictures at your
- 5 deposition. Do you remember that?
- 6 A. Yes.
- 7 | Q. I'm going to hand you what we've marked as
- 8 Exhibit Number 13. It says May of 1967. Did you take that
- 9 picture?
- 10 A. My father did probably.
- 11 Q. You were there?
- 12 A. No, no --
- 13 | Q. Do you recognize the picture?
- 14 A. Yes, yes.
- 15 Q. Would you tell the jury what that picture
- 16 represents?
- 17 | A. You're looking up the driveway. That's -- the
- 18 main house is to the right, the garage is to the left, and
- 19 you're looking back towards Cambridge. Our property line
- 20 right now runs at the elm tree, the large tree up front.
- 21 Q. So it abutted the Cambridge subdivision?
- 22 | A. Yes.
- 23 Q. I'm going to hand you what's been marked as
- 24 Exhibit Number 14. It's a series of three photographs.
- 25 Let's look at the top one first. And what does that

```
represent?
 1
 2
               Looking out from my kitchen window out towards
 3
     the railroad tracks and Bates Road.
               So am I looking at the railroad track way in the
 4
 5
    back here?
 6
    Α.
               Yes.
 7
     Q.
               Okay. And can you tell the jury how long ago
 8
     this photograph was taken?
 9
               Last winter.
10
               Okay. And the one in the middle represents,
11
     what, the photograph?
12
               That's -- we're looking from Bates Road down
13
     towards Cambridge. This is the back of my property. The
14
    water line will be to the left.
15
              So you have the woods behind your entire
     Q.
16
     property?
17
               There's a row of -- there's a row of trees and
18
     brush that runs the property line that separates the
19
    railroad and my property.
20
               Okay. And then the third photograph on Exhibit
21
     14 was taken when?
22
    Α.
               Last winter.
23
               And what does that photograph represent?
     Q.
24
               You're looking at the back view of our
```

property -- more of a right towards Cambridge. It's --

25

```
yeah, railroad tracks to your left -- the back corner, the
 1
 2
    rear corner.
 3
               So you're looking at an angle towards the
 4
    railroad?
 5
     Α.
               That's correct.
 6
     Q.
               Which is very hard to see, correct?
 7
     Α.
               Yes.
 8
               MR. BAHRET: Objection.
 9
               There's a pond now right behind the fence.
    Α.
10
               And I'm going to --
11
               THE COURT: If there was an objection, which was
12
     faint, it's overruled.
13
    BY MR. ROBON:
14
               I'm going to hand you what we've marked as
15
     Exhibit 15 and ask you to tell the jury who is in that
16
    picture?
17
    Α.
               It's me.
18
               That's you when you were a young child?
     Ο.
19
               Yes.
    Α.
20
               Do you remember how old you would have been?
     Q.
21
               Probably eight years old, maybe.
    Α.
22
    Q.
               Okay. And that's in your backyard?
23
    Α.
               Yes, that's --
24
     Q.
               With the train in the background?
               Yes, the corner of the back property. That's --
25
     Α.
```

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that's before the pond was put in.
 1
 2
               Okay. And has that area, if we went and looked
 3
     at that same area today, is it grown up?
 4
               Vegetation wise, yes, yes, very much so.
 5
               You indicated during your deposition that the
 6
     railroad manhole that existed a couple hundred, maybe
 7
     300 feet south of Bates Road, you were familiar with it?
 8
     Α.
               Yes.
 9
               And can you come over here, we'll give you a
10
     microphone, and show the jury -- we've drawn a map here,
11
     Bates Road is -- let's see you've got to have a seat over
12
     here. Bates Road is over this way, correct, kind of off
13
     the map a little bit?
14
               Yes, that's correct.
     Α.
15
               And this is the manhole that you're familiar
     Q.
16
     with?
17
     Α.
               Yes.
18
               And would you tell the jury the significance of
     Ο.
19
     that manhole for the property owners that are on Bates
20
     Road?
21
               Our septic tank lines.
     Α.
22
               THE COURT: I'm sorry I can't hear.
               Our septic tank lines from three houses ran to
23
24
     that point, ran down to that point.
```

25

BY MR. ROBON:

```
1
               So the septic tanks ran down to that manhole and
 2
     then that -- were you aware that that manhole then crossed
 3
     over under the old terminal tracks into this ditch?
               MR. BAHRET: Your Honor, I object to the leading.
 4
 5
               MR. ROBON:
                          I'll rephrase the question.
 6
               THE COURT: Thank you.
 7
    BY MR. ROBON:
 8
               Do you know where the water went after it went
 9
     into the manhole that is shown here on Exhibit Number 6?
10
               It went into the railroad ditch.
    Α.
11
               Okay. Along here?
     Q.
12
     Α.
               Yes.
13
               And how do you know that?
     Q.
14
               I was told that.
     Α.
15
               Okay. And when you were a child did you play on
     Q.
16
     that railroad property?
17
    Α.
               We used to hike down there.
18
               Okay. Did you actually see the manhole and the
19
    water outlet?
20
               Yes.
     Α.
                     Yes.
21
     Q.
               Okay.
22
    Α.
               Well, I never actually saw the pipe that ran into
23
    the ditch.
24
     Q.
               Right. But you knew it was there?
25
    Α.
               Yes.
```

```
MR. BAHRET: Objection.
 1
 2
               MR. ROBON:
                          You can take your seat back, please.
 3
               THE COURT:
                           Well, unless there's a foundation for
 4
     him expressing the view that he knew it was there since he
 5
     didn't see it, I'll sustain the objection and the jury will
 6
     be asked to disregard the answer to that question and the
 7
     question as well.
     BY MR. ROBON:
 8
               Is it a fact that in addition to the septic
 9
     system's draining into that manhole, the surface water --
10
11
               MR. BAHRET: Objection.
12
               MR. ROBON:
                          I'll rephrase the question.
1.3
     BY MR. ROBON:
14
               What other water drained into the manhole on the
     Ο.
15
     railroad property, to your knowledge?
16
               MR. BAHRET: Your Honor, I object.
                                                   There's no
17
     foundation that he knows.
18
               THE COURT: Well, let's hear what his answer is,
19
     and then we'll decide, maybe he'll say he doesn't know.
20
               Well, the whole train rolls down to that point.
21
     It's almost like a natural drainage. And that is what my
2.2
     great aunt told me who owned that section of the property.
23
               MR. BAHRET: Objection.
24
               THE COURT:
                           I'm going to sustain that objection.
25
     We can't have you testifying about what somebody told you.
```

```
That's hearsay. So just a moment.
 1
     BY MR. ROBON:
 2
 3
               You have to tell us what you know. Do you know
 4
     that the train drains towards the manhole?
 5
               Yes.
 6
               And eventually there was sanitary sewers put in
 7
     on Bates Road?
 8
     Α.
               Yes.
 9
               Were there any other areas behind Bates Road and
10
     your property and your neighbor's property for your service
11
     water to drain, other than into that manhole on the
12
     railroad property, to your knowledge?
13
               Not to my knowledge.
     Α.
14
               I have nothing further.
15
               THE COURT: Thank you.
16
               Do you want to cross examine?
17
               MR. BAHRET: Thank you, Your Honor.
18
                          CROSS EXAMINATION
19
    BY MR. BAHRET:
20
               Good morning, Mr. Sumner.
21
               Good morning.
     Α.
22
     0.
               My name's Bob Bahret. I represent the City of
23
    Toledo.
24
               Why did you put the pond in?
25
               That was my neighbor, Triskel put the pond in.
     Α.
```

```
It was after the sale of the property, after my aunt's
 1
 2
     death, great aunt's death.
 3
               Do you know why she put a retention pond in?
     Q.
 4
               That's more of a recreational -- just a swimming
 5
    pond.
 6
               Okay. Would you agree, sir, that your property
     Ο.
 7
     was not affected by the water main project?
 8
               That's correct.
 9
               Would you agree they didn't cut down -- whoever
10
     the contractor was, nobody cut down anything on your
11
    property?
12
     Α.
               No.
13
               Would you agree -- you don't have any evidence or
14
     any information that anything was cut down on Cambridge?
15
               I don't know anything about that.
     Α.
16
               Okay. In fact, you went out on the railroad
17
     right of way and you -- after the project was started and
18
     you looked down the fence line, correct?
19
     Α.
               Yes.
20
               And there used to be a railroad fence that whole
     length down there, correct?
21
2.2
     Α.
               It still is.
23
               And would -- what it looked like to you is that
24
     everything on the railroad side of the fence was cleared
```

and nothing on the other side of that fence was cleared?

25

```
Would you repeat that, please?
 1
 2
               What it looked like to you, when you looked down
 3
     the fence, like was that the stuff -- if you're at your
 4
     property looking towards Cambridge, everything left of the
 5
     fence is cleared, nothing to the right of the fence was
 6
     cleared?
 7
     Α.
               Oh, okay, yes, that's correct.
 8
               All right. And the last time you ever paid any
 9
     attention to that manhole was back after you got hooked up
10
     when your septic -- when your sewage didn't go in there
11
     anymore?
12
     Α.
               That's right, after we cut the lines off.
13
               And that was some --
     Q.
14
               Back in the early 90s.
     Α.
15
               So at least 15 years before this project,
     Q.
16
     correct?
17
     Α.
               Correct.
18
               Now, you don't have any idea how water would get
     Ο.
19
     into that manhole, do you?
20
               Well, it had to go through the save -- where our
21
     pipes connected, our septic tank lines connected to it.
     There was one pipe that ran into that manhole cover,
22
23
     whatever. It would have had to have gotten through there.
24
               What I'm getting at -- maybe I asked a poor
25
     question.
                There's no drain near the manhole, correct?
```

```
1
               Correct.
 2
               So if the water is going into that manhole, the
 3
     water's coming from somewhere far away, correct?
 4
               Well, that's correct.
 5
               And where it's coming from, you don't know?
 6
               I have no idea, really.
 7
               You haven't noticed any additional water or
     Q.
 8
     anything behind any of these properties, have you, since
 9
     the water main project was done?
10
               I never noticed anything.
11
               I mean, there was water that would typically pond
12
     back near that manhole and over towards Cambridge for as
13
     long as you've been alive?
14
               That's true, after the -- after snow melts and so
     Α.
15
     forth.
16
               And after a rain?
17
     Α.
               Yeah, that's correct.
18
               Thank you, sir.
     Ο.
19
               THE COURT: Any redirect?
20
               MR. ROBON: Nothing further.
21
               THE COURT: Thank you. You may step down,
2.2
    Mr. Sumner.
23
               Next witness.
24
               MR. BAHRET: Your Honor, I feel awkward with my
25
     back to the jury. Where do most people stand.
```

```
THE COURT: At the end of the jury box.
 1
 2
                    (A brief discussion was had off the record.)
 3
               THE COURT: Or you stand in the middle of the
 4
     courtroom which is a bit cluttered right now.
 5
               MR. BAHRET: Thank you.
 6
               Was herein, called as if upon examination, was by
 7
    me first duly sworn, as hereinafter certified, and said as
 8
     follows.
 9
                          DIRECT EXAMINATION
10
     BY MR. ROBON:
11
               Would you introduce yourself to the jury and tell
12
     the jury where you live?
               My name is Kevin Stawinski. I live in Cambridge
13
14
     subdivision, 30295 Jacqueline Place.
15
               And is that known as lot number 7?
     Q.
16
               No.
     Α.
17
    Q.
               Is it the second lot in from the cul-de-sac?
18
               It is, yes.
    Α.
19
               And you -- your driveway faces across the street
     Q.
     and the railroad's behind it?
20
21
               That's correct.
    Α.
22
    Q.
               Okay. And how long have you lived there, Kevin?
23
    Α.
               A little over four years now.
24
     Q.
               And did you build a home there?
25
               Yes.
     Α.
```

- 1 | Q. And what do you do for a living?
- 2 A. I am in medical sales.
- 3 Q. And do you have a family?
- 4 A. Yes, I do, a wife and a son.
- 5 Q. And how old?
- 6 A. He's six years old.
- 7 | Q. And would you describe for the jury how it was to
- 8 | live in the Cambridge subdivision before the city started
- 9 the improvement on the railroad property?
- 10 A. You know, living in Cambridge was beautiful. I
- 11 mean, it was pristine. It was serene, just a very
- 12 beautiful place to live. There were large plush trees, you
- 13 | know, that had very, you know, a lot of value to them, you
- 14 know, not only to the subdivision itself, but, you know, to
- 15 me personally, it did, as well.
- 16 Q. When you looked out of your driveway, what did
- 17 you see?
- 18 A. You're talking before the damage had been done?
- 19 Q. Yes, before -- before April of 2006?
- 20 | A. I saw a bunch of large plush, plush trees that
- 21 when in full foliage, were very beautiful trees, very old
- 22 mature, tall trees.
- 23 Q. And what do you see today?
- 24 A. Graffiti-laden trains from time to time. You
- 25 know, there's one or two trees, but certainly the trees --

```
the trees are all gone now.
 1
 2
               When the machines were cutting out the trees, did
 3
     you see the machines?
 4
               Yes.
 5
               I'm going to put up on the board here Exhibit
 6
     Number 16 and ask if you can tell the jury what that
 7
     instrument is or what that machine is?
               It looks like a feller buncher.
 8
               And how do you know what a feller buncher is?
 9
10
               Well, my six-year-old son actually has a keen
11
     interest in heavy equipment and stuff, and we watch a lot
12
     of the PBS shows, John-Deere-type stuff, and I actually
13
     learned a little something myself by watching it.
14
               Is that the machine or type of machine that you
     Ο.
15
     saw cutting the trees on the railroad right of way and also
16
     on the Cambridge subdivision?
17
               MR. BAHRET: Objection, Your Honor.
18
               Very sim --
     Α.
19
               THE COURT: Woah, woah. Time out, everybody take
20
     a breath.
21
               The basis for your objection?
22
               MR. BAHRET: He just asked this witness if he saw
23
     trees cut on the Cambridge property. This witness has no
24
     foundation to be able to say that.
25
               THE COURT: I think you can rephrase the
```

```
question. I'll sustain the objection.
 1
 2
               MR. ROBON: I'll rephrase it.
 3
     BY MR. ROBON:
 4
               With regard to the cutting of trees behind the
 5
     Cambridge subdivision, is this one of the machines that you
 6
     saw doing it?
 7
     Α.
               Yes.
 8
               Okay. And do you see the sign, it says stay back
     Q.
 9
     300 feet?
10
     Α.
               Yes.
11
               Would you come over here and look at the map
     Q.
     here, which is Exhibit Number 8?
12
13
               MR. BAHRET: Your Honor, could we approach?
14
               THE COURT:
                           If you must.
15
               MR. BAHRET:
                             I must.
16
                    (A side-bar conference was had off the
17
                    record.)
18
    BY MR. ROBON:
19
               Would you indicate to the jury how far it is from
     Q.
20
     your lot here to where the clearing was? And you'll see
21
     the depth of the lots.
22
     Α.
               220 feet.
23
     Q.
               And the right of way is probably, what, 60 feet?
24
               MR. BAHRET: Objection.
25
               That's a good estimate.
     Α.
```

```
THE COURT: Sustained. Jury will disregard the
 1
 2
     answer.
 3
     BY MR. ROBON:
 4
               You can take your seat.
 5
               I want you to take a look at Exhibit 17. Let's
 6
    put it up this way. Is this a picture of the giant -- I
 7
     think they call it a "hydro axe," on the front here,
     that -- with the big blades?
 8
 9
               Yes.
10
               Okay. And is that what you saw there cutting
11
     these trees down?
12
               It looks very much like it, yeah.
13
               Okay. I'm going have you take a look at Exhibit
14
          This is a photograph taken by Ric Man Construction on
     20.
     April 5 of 2006 before the cutting. And the railroad is on
15
16
     the left up here, and this is the -- where the old tracks
17
     used to be. Do you remember what -- what was this area
18
     used for, what did you see people doing here?
19
               MR. BAHRET: Your Honor, just so the jury knows
20
     this is not behind Cambridge.
21
               THE WITNESS: Marve, can you repeat the question?
22
    BY MR. ROBON:
23
               Yeah.
                      This path that existed here where the old
24
     track was removed?
25
               Yeah.
     Α.
```

```
Did you -- was that used, did you see people on
 1
 2
     that path?
 3
     Α.
               Yes.
 4
               You mentioned to me they were walking their dogs
 5
     and things like that?
 6
    Α.
               Absolutely.
 7
               Okay. My question is, you see the heavy brush
     Q.
 8
    here on the right side -- if you have to you can come over
 9
    here and take a better look?
10
               THE COURT: It should be on your screen.
11
               THE WITNESS: I can't see the laser pointed.
12
               MR. ROBON: On it doesn't show up.
13
    BY MR. ROBON:
14
               You see this brush area here?
     0.
15
               Yes.
    Α.
16
               Is that what you looked at when you lived over
     Q.
17
    here?
18
               All the heavy brush?
    Α.
19
               Yeah.
     Q.
20
     Α.
               Yes.
21
               MR. ROBON: Now, I'm putting on Exhibit Number
22
     30, Your Honor. I don't know why there's a glare on it
23
     over here on the side.
24
     BY MR. ROBON:
25
     Q.
              Can you identify that photograph?
```

```
Yeah, that -- that's looking at the railroad
 1
 2
    probably from standing on my porch or in my driveway
 3
    somewhere.
 4
               Okay. And that photograph adequately depicts
 5
    what is there today?
 6
    Α.
               Yes.
 7
               THE COURT: That photo was taken when, please?
 8
               MR. ROBON: I think this was taken in summer of
 9
     2007, Your Honor.
10
               THE COURT: Thank you.
11
    BY MR. ROBON:
12
               I'm going to hand you what we've marked as
13
    Exhibit 43.
14
               MR. BAHRET: Marve, could you try to adjust the
15
     lens so it's going straight down?
16
               MR. ROBON: Maybe that's what it's doing.
17
               MR. BAHRET: I'm not sure, but I'm just wondering
18
     if it's catching the light.
19
               MR. ROBON: Yours truly is not too mechanically
20
     inclined.
21
    BY MR. ROBON:
22
    Q.
               I pulled up Exhibit 43. Is this a depiction of
23
     what the back of the subdivision looked like before any
24
     cutting took place?
25
               MR. BAHRET: Your Honor, I object that is not --
```

```
1
               Yes.
 2
               MR. BAHRET: -- the back of the subdivision.
 3
               THE COURT: Let's have an identification or
 4
     authentication of the photograph, please, time, place.
     BY MR. ROBON:
 5
 6
               Before the cutting of the trees when you stood on
     Ο.
 7
     the cul-de-sac in your subdivision, is this what you looked
 8
     at?
 9
               Yes.
    Α.
10
               And is this what you still look at today at the
     Ο.
11
    back of the cul-de-sac, still there?
12
     Α.
               Yes.
13
               And does that adequately depict the foliage that
     Q.
14
    you have which would be at the end of the cul-de-sac over
15
    here?
            That would be at the end of the cul-de-sac over
16
    here?
17
     Α.
               Yes, that's correct.
18
               THE COURT: And this photo was taken about when?
19
               MR. ROBON: This was taken also in 2007.
               THE COURT: Thank you.
20
21
    BY MR. ROBON:
22
     O.
               I put up on the screen Exhibit 91. Is this what
23
     was up against the railroad property in 2006 prior to the
24
     cutting?
25
               MR. BAHRET: Objection. Not only is he leading,
```

```
but, again, that's not a picture from the -- between
 1
 2
     Cambridge and the railroad.
 3
               THE COURT: Who took these photographs?
 4
               MR. ROBON:
                          These were taken by me and
 5
     Mr. McCarthy, Your Honor.
 6
               MR. BAHRET: And he wasn't retained until after
 7
     the trees are gone, so obviously, that's not representative
     of what's behind Cambridge.
 8
 9
               MR. ROBON: And I think -- Mr. Laskey, did you
     take this one?
10
11
               THE PLAINTIFF:
                               Yes.
12
               MR. ROBON: I think Mr. Laskey took this one
13
     beforehand.
14
               MR. BAHRET: Wait a minute.
15
               THE COURT: Gentleman, your comments are toward
16
     me, please.
                  Thank you.
17
               MR. BAHRET: I apologize.
18
               THE COURT: As I indicated at the beginning of
19
     the trial and I'll repeat it now, ladies and gentlemen,
20
     comments of counsel are not evidence in the case.
21
               Would it be more efficient to have the person who
22
     took these photographs testify about them if that person's
23
     going to testify such as Mr. Laskey.
24
               MR. ROBON: Well Mr. Stawinski lives there, Your
25
     Honor.
```

```
I understand he was, but if he wasn't
 1
               THE COURT:
 2
     there when they were taken, he can't testify that this
 3
     photograph when it was taken or what it was taken of.
               MR. ROBON: Well, ask -- I ask him do you
 4
 5
     recognize this photograph.
 6
               THE COURT: Go for it.
 7
     Α.
               No, I don't.
 8
               MR. ROBON:
                          Okay.
 9
     BY MR. ROBON:
10
               But is it a similar depiction of what you looked
     Ο.
11
     at --
12
               MR. BAHRET: Objection.
13
                          -- across the way?
               MR. ROBON:
14
               THE COURT: I'll sustain the objection. Ask the
15
     jury to disregard the answer since he could not identify
16
     the photograph.
    BY MR. ROBON:
17
18
               Would you tell the jury what is it like to live
     Ο.
     today in the Cambridge subdivision?
19
20
               Living there today is extremely frustrating.
     Α.
21
               Can you explain how?
     Q.
22
     Α.
               Yes. Well, first of all, the damage that's been
23
     done has severely affected the value of my home.
24
     Q.
               And how is that?
25
               Well, after we built the house, we were going to
     Α.
```

go ahead and put a pool, in finish the basement, so we had 1 2 an appraisal done on the house by Fifth Third. I forget 3 the exact value, but it was around 630,000 because they 4 loaned me off the value of the home what it is based on. 5 And that number came back at 630. And we have subsequently 6 had the house on the market over the last three years, and 7 I believe we've had one offer in the neighborhood of about 8 \$400,000. So in that aspect, you know, I woke up one day with a house worth \$630,000, now it's worth \$400,000 9 10 because of the damage that's been done. 11 It's also frustrating in that, you know, the 12 trains are much more audible than they were. The trees 13 used to absorb a lot of the noise. You can clearly hear 14 the trains a lot more. 15 And without question, they're much more visible. 16 Before you wouldn't even have noticed the trains. 17 they're very visible, so. 18 Did you receive, as a property owner in the Ο. 19 Cambridge subdivision, any notice of a public improvement 20 in the railroad right of way? 21 MR. BAHRET: Objection, Your Honor. If I would --22 Α. 23 THE COURT: I'll overrule. He may testify if he 24 received anything. 25 Had I received anything at all in regards to that Α.

```
project being done, I will not have chosen to build there.
 1
 2
     BY MR. ROBON:
 3
               Okay.
     Q.
 4
               So the answer is, no, I did not.
 5
     Q.
               And just one day the trees are gone?
 6
               Literally within one day.
     Α.
 7
     Q.
               What would you like to see done at the Cambridge
 8
     subdivision?
 9
               MR. BAHRET: Objection.
10
               THE COURT: I'm not sure where this is going.
11
     seems a bit --
12
               MR. ROBON:
                          I'll rephrase it.
13
               THE COURT: Thank you.
14
    BY MR. ROBON:
15
               To -- to cure the problems for you and other
     Q.
16
     property owners in the Cambridge subdivision, what would
17
     you recommend or like to see be done along the railroad
18
     tracks?
19
               MR. BAHRET: Your Honor, I object. He is not a
20
     party to this case.
21
               MR. ROBON: He's an affected property owner, Your
22
    Honor.
23
               MR. BAHRET: It doesn't make him a party to the
24
     case.
25
               THE COURT: I understand. Take a breath
```

```
gentleman.
 1
 2
               I'll overrule the objection. He may answer.
 3
               Well, short of going back in time and -- and
 4
     standing those trees back up right, which is impossible, I
 5
     would like to see restitution made with the trees, with a
 6
     barrier, I don't know if you can do it with trees to that
     magnitude and that beauty that have been destroyed, to that
 7
 8
     height with that amount of value, but clearly there needs
     to be something done in terms of some sort of barrier to
 9
10
     make it the trains less visible. I'm not asking for any
11
     more than what was there, but to have something of equal
12
     value there to create the value that I once had in my
13
     house, personally, let alone Cambridge subdivision. I
14
     think that would be a fair, you know, fair to ask for that.
15
     Q.
               Okay. Nothing further. Thank you.
16
               THE COURT:
                           Thank you.
17
               You may cross-examine.
18
               MR. BAHRET: Thank you.
19
                          CROSS EXAMINATION
20
     BY MR. BAHRET:
21
               Good morning, Mr. Stawinski.
     Q.
2.2
     Α.
               Good morning.
23
     Q.
               My name's Bob Bahret. I represent the City of
24
     Toledo.
25
               Sir, when did you build the house?
```

- 1 A. About four, four and a half years ago.
- 2 Q. So in the year 2003 or four?
- 3 A. I'm not good with numbers, but that's pretty
- 4 accurate.
- 5 Q. Okay. And back then it appraised at 630?
- 6 A. According to Fifth Third Bank, yes.
- 7 | Q. Okay. Are you aware of the fact that anybody
- 8 | that appraises their house now will get a lower appraisal
- 9 than what they got in 2004?
- 10 A. Well, at the time I had the appraisal done, we
- 11 were probably within the greatest housing boom ever.
- 12 | Q. That's my point. Are you aware that we're not in
- 13 | the greatest housing boom ever now?
- 14 A. I'm very well aware of that.
- 15 Q. And are you aware of the fact that because of
- 16 that appraisals are, not only are sales down, but the value
- 17 | of a house is down?
- 18 A. I am aware of that, yeah.
- 19 Q. Okay. Now, your house is lot 7; is that right?
- 20 A. Yes.
- 21 Q. And so across from you is 12 and to your right
- 22 | nine, ten, and 11?
- 23 A. I can't see the picture, but I'm going to have to
- 24 assume you're correct in saying that.
- 25 Q. All right. You're not saying that all these

trees that you described as suddenly being gone are on 1 2 Cambridge property, you're not a surveyor, correct? 3 No, that's correct. Α. 4 And in fact, are you aware of the fact that even 5 the Old Granite owners acknowledge that every single tree 6 removed from -- in this half of the development behind it, 7 you can't see where I'm pointing, can you? 8 No, I can't. 9 Sorry. I either block you or block the jury. 10 this half of the development, the trees that were removed, 11 nobody contends were on Old Granite property or Cambridge 12 property, did you know that? 13 I don't, no. Α. 14 Okay. And you'd agree that if that's true, you'd 15 still see the train, correct? 16 What do you mean? Α. 17 The barrier, as you called it, would be gone. 18 fact, it is gone even though trees weren't removed from 19 Cambridge, at least on that half, correct? 20 That's correct. Α. 21 Okay. You don't own any of the trees that were 22 removed, do you? 23 Α. No. 24 And so far as you know, Cambridge doesn't own any

25

of those trees and never did?

```
When I built, I didn't know where those trees
 1
 2
     lied.
 3
               Okay. You don't have anybody that lives
     Q.
 4
     immediately next door to you, do you?
 5
               No.
 6
     Q.
               In fact, how many people have moved into that
 7
    neighborhood since you did?
 8
               I think two, two families.
     Α.
 9
               Two. And when was the last one?
     Ο.
10
               Probably a couple years ago.
11
               How many lots, if you know, how many lots sold in
     Q.
     that subdivision in the two years before -- before?
12
13
               I don't know.
     Α.
14
               Trees -- would it surprise you if the answer was
     Ο.
15
     zero?
16
               No.
     Α.
17
     Q.
               Okay. And how many people built houses with
18
     their backyard up to those tracks?
19
     Α.
               One.
20
               And that's the spec house owned by Old Granite,
21
     correct?
22
    Α.
               Yes.
23
     Q.
               How many outside customers built the house with
24
     their backyard touching the railroad right of way?
25
               Other than spec house, none. None.
     Α.
```

- Zero. And in fact, you selected a lot on -- not 1 2 abutting the railroad tracks? 3 Α. Yes. 4 Why? 5 My wife picked it out. 6 Did you ever ask her why she didn't pick one out Ο. 7 that abuts the railroad tracks? 8 No. But at that time had she done that, I would have been willing to appease her. 10 Okay. You're not claiming you couldn't see the Ο. 11 train before the trains gone back there? 12 Α. Very minimally. 13 You could see them, though, correct? Q. 14 Yes. Α. 15 And obviously you could hear them, correct? Q. 16 Not to the magnitude you can now. Α. 17 Q. Did you hear my question? Could you hear them? 18 Yes. Α. 19 In fact, they blow a whistle when they approach Q. 20 Bates Road from either direction, correct? 21 I don't know where they blow their whistle, but I 22 can hear it. 23 I mean, anybody with reasonable hearing is going 24 to hear the whistleblowing, correct?
- 25 A. I just said yes, I hear their whistle.

```
1
               Okay.
                      Thanks.
 2
               THE COURT: Any redirect?
 3
               MR. ROBON:
                           Yes.
                        REDIRECT EXAMINATION
 4
     BY MR. ROBON:
 5
 6
               Kevin, in a market that's as bad as depicted by
 7
     Mr. Bahret, did removal of the trees further exasperate the
 8
     value of your house in a lower manner?
 9
               Well, the only way to judge that is to, you know,
10
     listen to the comments of the realtors as the people who
11
    have come through my house have commented on the house.
12
               What are those comments?
13
               The only thing --
     Α.
14
               MR. BAHRET: Objection. Objection.
15
               THE COURT: Excuse me. There's an objection.
16
               That will be sustained. That's hearsay. He
17
     cannot comment on what others have told him.
18
    BY MR. ROBON:
19
               What do you believe in your own mind is the
20
     reason that your home hasn't sold?
21
               Well, what I know to be true is that it's all
2.2
    based on the damage that's been done by the construction.
23
     Q.
               The removal of the trees?
24
               The removal of the trees, yes.
25
               MR. ROBON: Nothing further. Thank you very
```

```
1
     much.
 2
               THE WITNESS:
                             Sure.
 3
                         RECROSS EXAMINATION
 4
     BY MR. BAHRET:
 5
               I thought I heard you say the house has been on
 6
     the market three years?
 7
               Yes, on and off, not consistently.
     Α.
 8
               And that includes time before the trees were
 9
     removed, correct?
10
    Α.
               Yes.
11
     Q.
               Why didn't it sell then, sir?
12
     Α.
               I don't know.
13
               Thank you.
     Q.
14
               THE COURT: You may step down. Thank you.
15
               Plaintiff may call next witness.
16
               Was herein, called as if upon examination, was by
17
    me first duly sworn, as hereinafter certified, and said as
18
     follows.
19
                          DIRECT EXAMINATION
20
     BY MR. ROBON:
21
               Tom, would you introduce yourself to the jury,
22
     tell them where you live, about your family.
23
     Α.
               Thomas Taylor. I live in Monclova, Ohio.
24
     would be -- I don't know if you're familiar with Monclova.
25
     Q.
               You've got to speak up.
```

```
Monclova, Ohio. That's about Waterville.
 1
 2
     lived out there for 25 years, and I have five kids, and
 3
     they all went to Anthony Wayne High School. And I'm a
 4
     general contractor. My wife and my son and I have a
 5
     general contracting company. Now we are in Columbus
 6
     building tenant build out, lease spaces in strip centers.
 7
     Q.
               And this is your first time ever testifying in a
 8
     lawsuit like this?
 9
               Yes, it is.
10
               I know you're nervous. We're used to it.
11
     he -- so if you need a glass of water or anything, just
12
     speak up.
13
               Would you tell the jury how old you are?
14
               Fifty-eight.
     Α.
15
               Can you tell the jury when you first met Jack
     Q.
16
     Laskey?
17
     Α.
               I think it was in 1999.
18
               And can you tell the jury how you met him and how
     Ο.
19
     you went into business with him?
20
               I found a piece of property in Perrysburg on the
21
     river, and I sold that piece of property, and Jack's wife
22
     Greta ran Port Lawrence Title, and they did the title work.
23
     And at that time I was looking at this other piece of
24
     property on the river, Cambridge, this subdivision, and I
25
     was talking to Greta, Jack's wife about this property, and
```

- 1 she introduced me to Jack.
- 2 | Q. So you saw this vacant piece of land that you
- 3 | thought was, what?
- 4 A. It would be a good development.
- 5 Q. Upscale development?
- 6 A. Yeah.
- 7 Q. Your background, you went to high school?
- 8 A. Yes.
- 9 Q. And what did you do after that, as far as
- 10 | education?
- 11 A. Well, I went to -- I got into plumbing for a few
- 12 years. And I became a plumbing contractor up until, I
- 13 | can't remember.
- 14 Q. A few years ago?
- 15 A. Yeah. And then general contracting after that.
- 16 Q. And when you met Mr. Laskey, there was a decision
- 17 | to form a limited liability company called Old Granite
- 18 Development LTD?
- 19 A. Yes. I think it was --
- 20 Q. Was it called something before that?
- 21 A. Yes, it was.
- 22 Q. Country?
- 23 A. Country French Developers and then they changed
- 24 the name to Old Granite.
- 25 Q. And what percentage of ownership do you have in

- 1 Old Granite?
- 2 A. 50 percent.
- 3 | Q. Is this the first subdivision that you developed
- 4 or have you had experience in other subdivisions?
- 5 A. No. I had two other ones that I was involved in.
- 6 One was up in Sylvania with Mark Lavoy, and the Stanley's
- 7 were involved in that one.
- 8 Q. Were they successful?
- 9 A. Yes, they sold out. They were villas.
- 10 Q. Tell the jury what you liked about the Cambridge
- 11 | vacant land when you saw it.
- 12 A. Well, the location, it was in a real good
- 13 | location, and the ground was -- it was a good piece of
- 14 ground. It wasn't -- it was an easier development. The
- 15 | utilities were right there. And the -- well, it had -- it
- 16 was the storm -- a lot of time, utilities are hard to get
- 17 sometimes.
- 18 Q. You mean like sanitary sewers?
- 19 A. Sanitary water and storm drains, sometimes
- 20 | they're a problem. In Sylvania we had a problem getting
- 21 the storm water off-site. In Cambridge everything was
- 22 on-site.
- 23 Q. Did you hire an engineering firm to layout the
- 24 construction plans?
- 25 A. Yes, Peterman and Associates out of Findlay.

- Q. And they're where?A. Findlay.
- Q. Did you kind of oversee the installation of the utilities and the road and the drainage and things like that?
- 6 Yes, I -- I contacted the engineering firm, 7 Peterman and went through the zoning change and the layout. 8 There was quite a few different layouts that were by the 9 time we got it final, final approval. And then I got the 10 final plans, and then I put that out to bid to different 11 contractors, and it was awarded to TNS. And then we 12 started the development, and I was on a daily basis on site 13 with them. And went over all his invoices and made sure
  - Q. Could you come over here for a moment. I can show you some documents. This is Exhibit Number 1. This is an aerial that depicts the Cambridge subdivision taken in 2006 before the tree cutting?
- 19 A. Uh-huh.

they got paid.

- 20 Q. You have to speak up?
- 21 **A**. Yes.

14

15

16

17

18

- Q. Okay. Do you see the line of trees here, two
- 23 lines of trees?
- 24 A. Yes.
- Q. Can you explain to the jury those two lines of

```
trees, what -- what is there?
 1
 2
               Well, it was -- it's --
 3
               THE COURT: Let's give Mr. Taylor a microphone,
 4
    please.
 5
               Thank you.
 6
    BY MR. ROBON:
 7
     Q.
               I know you're nervous. Just take your time.
 8
     You've got to hold it up close.
               It was about 20-foot of -- I don't know how to
 9
10
     explain it -- trees and briars and brush. It would -- I
11
     would say 20 or 25-foot high from one end of the property
12
     to the other, and it was on the property line, the back
13
     part of our property and also on the railroad property. I
14
     think there was another -- there was an active train and
15
     still is. And there was an abandoned tracks. And between
16
     the two tracks was another row of brush and trees.
17
     kind of like a buffer between our property and the trains.
18
               And did that buffer convince you that you should
     Ο.
19
     purchase this property?
20
               MR. BAHRET: Objection.
21
               MR. ROBON: I'll rephrase the question.
22
               THE COURT:
                          Thank you.
23
    BY MR. ROBON:
24
               Did that buffer have an impact in your decision?
25
               Yes, it did.
     Α.
```

```
And can you tell the jury what you are trying to
 1
 2
     accomplish with this particular subdivision, what kind of
 3
     market, who were you marketing to?
 4
               They were higher-end houses that just like the
 5
     neighbors on both -- down in the Perrysburg -- and I don't
 6
     know, it was a single-family housing, but it was an
 7
     association that --
 8
               Homeowners association?
 9
               Homeowners association. It was a private gated
10
     community, upscale.
11
               And would you tell the jury what's across the
     Q.
12
     street from the entryway here. What is over here on the
13
     other side of River Road?
14
               Well, it's like maybe, I'm guessing, 15-acre lots
     Α.
15
     in a single-family house.
16
               Mansions?
     Q.
17
               Mansions, big stone old mansions.
     Α.
18
               We have a graphic of the Cambridge subdivision,
     Ο.
19
     and it shows --
20
               THE COURT: Is that Number 8? I'm sorry.
21
               MR. ROBON: I'm sorry, this is Number 6, Your
22
     Honor.
             Thank you.
     BY MR. ROBON: You were -- you were involved in the
23
24
     drainage plans for the subdivision, correct?
25
               Yes, I was.
     Α.
```

- 1 Q. And would you tell the jury what the drainage
- 2 purpose or plan was?
- 3 A. The engineer drawings Peterman drew were
- 4 specifically to drain this piece of property only.
- 5 Q. Cambridge subdivision?
- 6 A. Cambridge subdivision.
- 7 | Q. And did you install catch basins at the back near
- 8 the railroad?
- 9 A. Yes, we did.
- 10 Q. And what was the purpose of that?
- 11 A. To drain the back piece of that -- our ground.
- 12 Q. So it would be dry?
- 13 **A.** Yes.
- 14 Q. Okay. Now, what has happened on that site
- 16 the city installed the water main, what -- what's occurred
- 17 on your Cambridge subdivision lots?
- 18 A. Ponding by the railroad tracks behind lot 16, 15,
- 19 | 13 like that, the water's still there. Our drains don't
- 20 take that away.
- 21 | Q. And why don't they take it away?
- 22 A. They're not designed to.
- 23 Q. They're designed only to handle the water from
- 24 your own subdivision?
- 25 A. Correct.

```
1
               You believe the water is coming from someplace
 2
     else?
 3
     Α.
               Yes.
 4
               MR. BAHRET: Objection.
 5
               MR. ROBON: I'll rephrase the question.
 6
    BY MR. ROBON:
 7
               Where is the water coming from?
     Q.
 8
               MR. BAHRET: Objection.
 9
               Outside.
     Α.
10
               THE COURT: Let's see if we can establish a
11
     foundation for him to give that opinion.
12
     BY MR. ROBON:
13
               Have you been out there when there's been
14
    ponding?
15
    Α.
               Yes.
16
               And where did you see the water coming from?
17
               MR. BAHRET: Objection.
18
               THE COURT: Overruled.
19
    BY MR. ROBON:
20
     Ο.
               You can answer.
21
               Off site.
    Α.
22
     Q.
               Would you show the jury with the little push
23
    button where you saw the water coming from?
24
               It comes from this piece of property down the
25
     tracks and from this piece of property here, and it's
```

```
ponding up in this area.
 1
 2
               And does this Exhibit Number 6 fairly depict the
 3
     subdivision, the drain tile that is in the railroad right
     of way where the manhole was, the two ditches, and the
 4
 5
     railroad tracks?
 6
               Yes, it does.
    Α.
 7
     Q.
               As it exists today?
 8
     Α.
               Yes.
 9
               I'm going to put up Exhibit Number 4. This is a
10
     graphic of the Cambridge subdivision standing on Ford Road
11
     looking towards Bates Road, with the house here being on
12
     lot 15. Can you tell us, you built this spec home or
13
     supervised the building of it?
14
               Yes, I did.
     Α.
15
               And what is this here?
     Q.
16
               Walk-out basement.
17
               And can you tell the jury why you designed a
18
    walk-out basement?
19
               They're more desirable to have a walk-out
     Α.
20
    basement.
21
               Okay. And what did you see when you walked out
     Q.
22
     of this basement, is this what you saw?
23
               MR. BAHRET: Objection.
24
               THE COURT: Overruled. He may answer.
25
     BY MR. ROBON:
```

```
After the house was completed in late '05 or
 1
 2
     early 2006?
 3
               Trees and brush and it was covered up. I
 4
     couldn't see much of the tracks or the railroad ballast.
 5
               Could you see just the top of the trains?
 6
     Α.
               Yes.
 7
               And Exhibit Number 5 is a graphic using the same
     Q.
 8
     view, but today it depicts flooding in the rear of the yard
     in lot 15 and others, and that's accurate?
 9
10
               MR. BAHRET: Objection.
11
               THE COURT: Basis is leading?
12
               MR. BAHRET: It's clearly leading.
13
               THE COURT: Sustained.
14
               MR. ROBON: I'll rephrase it.
    BY MR. ROBON:
15
16
               Tell the jury what's on the back of lot 15, 14,
17
     13, and 12 today.
18
               Standing water.
     Α.
19
               Is it worse at some times than others?
     Q.
20
               Yes, heavy rain, it's --
     Α.
21
               And what happened to the trees that were in the
22
    back of the property?
23
               They were all cut down when the city put the
24
     water main down the tracks.
25
     Q.
               Now, you and I were out there Saturday, correct?
```

```
1
     Α.
               Yes.
               And we saw a corner monument, concrete set in the
 2
 3
    ground?
 4
     Α.
               Yes.
 5
               Okay. I want to take a look at Exhibit 6.
 6
     that corner monument right here on the corner of lot 16?
 7
    Α.
               Yes.
 8
               And then we also found one down here on the
 9
     corner of lot 9?
10
    Α.
               Yeah.
11
               And the railroad fence was inside those
12
    monuments, was it not?
13
               Yes.
     Α.
14
               MR. BAHRET: Objection.
15
               MR. ROBON: I'll rephrase the question, Your
16
    Honor.
17
               THE COURT: Thank you.
18
    BY MR. ROBON:
               Tell us the location of the railroad fence in
19
     Q.
20
     comparison to the surveyor's monument.
21
               The fence was on our property.
    Α.
22
     Q.
               And by how much?
               By maybe 5 foot.
23
    Α.
24
               And is it -- tell us what your belief is with
25
     regard to the trees that were on the back of these lots,
```

```
the trees, brush, and brambles, who owned them?
 1
 2
               I would say half of that was on -- most of that
 3
     was on the property line, right on the line. Half of it --
 4
     I'm saying half of it was on Cambridge and half of it was
 5
     on the railroad.
 6
               Okay. And can you describe for the jury, was it
 7
     narrower at the bottom and higher at the top, how much did
     it branch out?
 8
 9
               It was narrower at the bottom, and there were
10
     trees across the back of that property. And then it -- it
11
     got thicker at the top, maybe 15 or 20 feet, pretty much
12
     what's existing down the tracks right now.
13
               And when you and I were out there, we found a
14
     chain-link fence along this side, didn't we, the
15
    neighboring property?
16
     Α.
               Yes.
17
               And would you tell the jury how close the
18
     railroad -- not the railroad, the city and its contractors
19
     cut to that fence?
20
               They cut right --
21
               MR. BAHRET: I object.
22
               THE COURT: Well, if you establish a foundation
23
    he may answer.
24
     BY MR. ROBON:
25
               We were there, correct?
     Ο.
```

```
1
     Α.
               Correct.
 2
               Did they stay back eight or 10 feet?
 3
               MR. BAHRET: Objection.
 4
     BY MR. ROBON:
 5
               Can you tell us how far they stayed from the
 6
     fence of the neighboring property?
 7
               Well, they -- it looks like today that -- that
     Α.
 8
    brush was cut towards the tracks from that fence, and I
 9
     think that is the property line.
10
               Over here?
     Ο.
11
     Α.
               Yes.
12
               Okay. But the fence was barely visible?
13
               MR. BAHRET: Your Honor, I mean, this is -- I
14
     object.
15
               MR. ROBON: I'll rephrase the question.
16
    BY MR. ROBON:
17
               How difficult was it to see the chain-link fence
18
     on this adjacent property when we were there a few feet
     away from it?
19
20
               Pretty -- you couldn't see the chain-link fence.
     Α.
21
               And with -- why couldn't --
     Q.
22
    Α.
               It was covered up with brush --
23
     Q.
               -- you see it?
24
               Okay.
25
               -- about 20-foot high with trees.
    Α.
```

```
1
               Now, this home that was constructed on lot 15, do
 2
     you remember what the cost of that home was?
 3
     Α.
               No, I don't.
 4
               Okay. To solve the water problem of the ponding
 5
     that's in the back of these lots, can you explain, as a
 6
     contractor, to the jury what most likely would have to be
 7
     done to drain this area in the back of lots 11, 12, 13, 14,
 8
     15, and 16?
 9
               MR. BAHRET: No foundation it's within his area
10
     of expertise, Your Honor.
11
               MR. ROBON: I'll rephrase it. I'll get the
12
     background.
13
               THE COURT: Thank you.
14
    BY MR. ROBON:
15
               You have completed development working in the
     Q.
16
     past? And you have been concerned with drainage in the
17
    past?
18
               Yes.
     Α.
19
               And you get estimates, correct?
     Q.
20
     Α.
               Yes.
21
               And you've done excavating, I mean, had it done
     Q.
    for you?
22
23
    Α.
               Yes.
24
     Q.
               And TNS did the whole project here?
25
               Yes.
     Α.
```

```
Did you talk to TNS about solving this problem or
 1
     did Mr. Laskey?
 2
 3
    Α.
               I -- I have talked to him, Tad.
 4
               And what have they indicated to you would need to
 5
    be done to alleviate the flooding problem?
 6
               MR. BAHRET: Objection.
 7
               THE COURT: It's hearsay. That's sustained.
 8
    BY MR. ROBON:
 9
               What have you determined that needs to be done to
10
     solve the flooding problem?
11
               MR. BAHRET: Your Honor, there's still no
12
     foundation he knows. That's why he hires the other people.
13
               THE COURT: Take a breath. I'll sustain the
14
     objection.
15
    BY MR. ROBON:
16
               In your opinion as a contractor, property owner,
17
     what will need to be done to alleviate the flooding
18
    problem?
19
               MR. BAHRET: Objection, same basis. There's no
20
     foundation.
21
               THE COURT:
                          I agree.
22
               MR. ROBON: I think as a property owner, Your
23
     Honor, he's got a right to testify as to the value and how
24
    he thinks his problem can be improved.
25
               THE COURT: Certainly as a property owner he has
```

```
a right to testify as to value, but you're asking him for
 1
 2
     an opinion with respect to the correction of a flooding
 3
     problem, and I believe unless there's some expertise he has
 4
     himself in that area, that's not an appropriate opinion
 5
     given the foundation testimony I've heard so far.
 6
               MR. ROBON: Your Honor, wouldn't this be an
 7
     exception to the hearsay exception under the business
 8
     identification rule of things that he's learned in the
 9
     course of his business talking with getting estimates as
10
     part of a business process?
11
               THE COURT: Boy, that's a new one on me.
12
     were the case, you would have excluded a whole number of
13
     people from your witness list. I don't believe that is an
14
     appropriate exception. I'm happy to have any authority
15
     that proves me wrong. I'm not aware of that.
16
               MR. ROBON: Let me think of a proper question,
17
     Your Honor.
18
               THE COURT: Why don't we use this to take our
19
    morning break?
20
               It's 10:20. Ladies and gentlemen, we'll take --
21
    how long would you like? Ten minutes, 15 minutes.
22
     minutes, 10 minutes which puts us at 10:35.
23
               Please remember the rules and leave your notes on
24
     your chair.
                  Thank you.
25
                    (A brief recess was taken.)
```

```
1
               MR. ROBON: Thank you, Your Honor.
 2
     BY MR. ROBON:
 3
               I'm asking you to take a look at Exhibit Number
     Q.
 4
         Can you tell the jury what this document is?
 5
               It's a layout of Cambridge subdivision. This is
     a layout of Cambridge subdivision. It shows 22 lots, of a
 6
 7
    private, gated community.
 8
               And this is what you're half owner of?
 9
               Correct.
     Α.
10
               You can take a seat now.
11
               Before we took a morning break, I was attempting
12
     to get an answer of what you thought needed to be done with
13
     regard to the flooding problem. Did you indicate to The
14
     Court when you were a tradesman what degree of level of
15
     accomplishment that you received?
16
               I was a master plumber. I held a master plumbers
17
     license and sewer layers license in the city of Youngstown
18
     and the city of Parma, Ohio and the surrounding counties.
19
               And would you indicate what a master plumber
     Q.
20
     does?
21
               Installs -- installs pipes and has knowledge of
     Α.
22
    pipe sizing.
               Drainage?
23
     Q.
24
     Α.
               And drainage.
25
              Have you ever been responsible for retention
     Q.
```

```
pond?
 1
 2
               Yes, I have. In Whitehouse, Ohio I built a
 3
     retainage pond and a metering system to meter the flood --
 4
               What is a meter system so the jury understands on
 5
     the flow of water?
 6
               Retention ponds are to retain site water from
 7
     discharging into the creeks and rivers at a huge rate all
 8
               They size the pipes to meter the flow of water so
     it doesn't flood the creeks and rivers.
 9
10
     Ο.
               So it stores it in the retention pond?
11
               Correct.
     Α.
12
               And then let's it out slowly?
13
               Correct.
     Α.
14
               I'm going to go back to my question. With regard
15
     to clearing up the drainage problem or the water problem on
16
     the Cambridge subdivision, could you tell the jury what you
17
     believe needs to be done to cure that problem?
18
               MR. BAHRET: Your Honor, there's still no
19
     foundation.
                  The fact that is he -- can follow plans and
20
     install things doesn't make him qualified to design them.
21
               THE COURT: Let me see counsel up here, please.
22
                    (A side-bar conference was had off the
23
                    record.)
24
               MR. ROBON: You can answer the question. Do you
25
     remember what it was?
```

```
1
               Give me --
 2
                    (Question was read back.)
 3
     Α.
               The water needs to be -- there needs to be a
 4
     storm drainage system installed.
     BY MR. ROBON:
 5
 6
               And how did you suggest going about doing that?
 7
               This would have to be engineered and -- and
     Α.
 8
     it's -- and installed, but --
 9
               MR. BAHRET: I think he just proved my objection
10
     and I'll renew it.
11
               THE COURT: Well, this is a new question, and I
12
     don't know, do you have experience with storm drainage
13
     systems in and the engineering of them and the planning of
14
     them and the installing of them?
15
               No. But I -- all I know is what needs to be
     Α.
16
     done.
17
               THE COURT: And you've indicated --
18
               I know that.
     Α.
19
               THE COURT: -- in your prior answer what that is.
20
     So we'll let the prior answer stand, and I'll sustain the
21
     objection to this question.
2.2
    BY MR. ROBON:
23
               When you say engineering needs to be done, an
24
     engineer needs to come out and draw plans, correct?
25
     A.
               Correct.
```

```
1 Q. Okay. How would they get under the road?
```

- 2 A. Jacqueline Place, which is the road that's in the
- 3 middle of the subdivision, if they have to get out to River
- 4 Road for the drain tank, they would have to bore under the
- 5 road because of the utilities that are already in place.
- 6 Q. Okay. And do you have an idea of what the cost
- 7 of a boring would be?
- 8 A. Yes.
- 9 | Q. Can you tell the jury what that is?
- 10 A. Between 15,000 and 20,000.
- 11 Q. And you mentioned a retention pond and on the
- 12 | subdivision, you have only one spot that is shown as open
- 13 space or green space. Is that where you would put the
- 14 retention pond?
- 15 A. I would assume that's where they would put it.
- 16 Q. And do you have experience in digging retention
- 17 ponds?
- 18 | A. I have experience in having them installed for
- 19 | me, yes.
- 20 0. You did one in Whitehouse?
- 21 A. Yes, I did.
- 22  $\parallel$  Q. What do you estimate the cost of a retention pond
- 23 in the Cambridge subdivision would be?
- MR. BAHRET: Objection, Your Honor. He's not an
- 25 expert in that.

Ask me the question again. 1 2 THE COURT: The question is, do you have an 3 estimate of the cost of a retention pond in the Cambridge 4 subdivision, and the objection was raised to that. 5 you have experience in the cost? I'm asking the question 6 now, do you have experience in the cost or the building or 7 the planning of retention ponds? 8 Yes, I do. I installed one in Whitehouse on a 9 commercial piece of property. 10 THE COURT: The question then is, what do you 11 estimate the cost of a retention pond in the Cambridge 12 subdivision to be? 13 You may answer. 14 Thirty to \$40,000. Α. 15 BY MR. ROBON: 16 And --17 Because of the situation on that site on and off 18 spoiled dirt hauling off. 19 Could you give the jury an estimate of what the Q. 20 engineering cost would be to design a system to drain the 21 water under the road into a retention pond eventually into 2.2 a storm drain out on River Road? 23 Α. 15,000 -- 12 to 15,000.

And then can you give the jury an idea of the

cost on a running foot basis of trenching and putting a

24

25

```
pipe in for drainage?
 1
 2
               On that site, I couldn't honestly say --
 3
               What?
     Q.
 4
               -- because --
               What is the normal range?
 5
 6
               It could run -- it could run a hundred dollars a
     Α.
 7
     foot.
 8
               A -- per linear foot?
 9
               Yes, sir, per linear foot. There's a lot of
10
     factors, depth, premium fill.
11
               What do you expect the depth would have to be on
     Ο.
12
     this property, since you're going from --
13
               Let me ask the question this way: Would you come
14
     over here again, Tom. Show the jury where the lowest part
15
     of the subdivision is so they can see over here.
16
               Lowest part -- the lowest part of the
17
     subdivision?
18
               Yeah, topographical?
19
               I would say is right in here. There's a ravine
20
     right in here. And our storm drain right now crosses River
21
     Road right here and drains into the river. Now, this was
2.2
     going to be the retention pond, and that's the only
23
     reasonable spot to put one, and we want to drain this area
24
     here -- I'm sorry, here. It may have to be that the drain
25
     would -- we might not be able to get across right here to
```

- 1 this area, so it may have to go this -- this route.
- 2 | Q. Along the perimeter of the property?
- 3 A. Then you're going to get deeper. The deeper you
- 4 | go, the more money it costs. If you went through this area
- 5 here, it's between lots and easements, and again, you would
- 6 be boring under the road and there's all the utilities,
- 7 sewer, water, gas, storm sewer, existing storm sewer.
- 8 Q. In the right of way?
- 9 A. In the right of way, that would have to be dealt
- 10 with.
- 11 Q. And is it fair to say that the rear of the lots
- 12 between nine and 16 are lower than the road?
- 13 A. Yes.
- 14 Q. Okay. Thanks. I want you to take a look at
- 15 | Exhibit 19. You mentioned brambles and trees that were on
- 16 the back of the lots prior to the clearing of the lots by
- 17  $\parallel$  the city. Is this the type of brambles and brush that was
- 18 there that a photograph was taken from the adjacent
- 19 property?
- 20 A. Yes, that's what was on our property.
- 21 Q. And that accurately depicts --
- 22 A. Yes, it does.
- 23 Q. -- what was there prior to the city installation?
- 24 A. Yes, it does.
- 25 Q. I'm going to hand you what we've marked as

```
Exhibit 41, this here. Did you indicate -- do you see
 1
 2
     that?
 3
     Α.
               Yeah.
 4
               What is -- what is this base right here?
 5
     A.
               That's a concrete monument, property corner.
 6
     0.
               And who installs those?
 7
     Α.
               The engineer.
 8
               And it would be Peterman and Associates?
     Ο.
 9
               Yeah.
    Α.
10
               And which -- what is -- what is this in
     Ο.
11
    relationship to your property?
12
     Α.
               Back corner of lot 9.
13
               And was that there when the city surveyed the
     Ο.
14
    property to put the drain in or the storm water in?
15
               Yes, it was.
    Α.
16
               Was it visible?
17
     Α.
               Yes, it was.
18
               Did they clear -- did the city clear into your
     Ο.
19
    property based upon where that monument is located?
20
               Yes, they did, from one end of that property pin
21
     to the other property pin, from one end of that subdivision
2.2
    to the other, along the tracks.
               I'm going to hand you what's been marked as
23
24
     Exhibit 83. Did you compile a cost of the subdivision when
25
     it was built back in 2001, you and Mr. Laskey?
```

```
Yes, we did.
 1
 2
               And is Exhibit Number 83 -- it shows a total of
 3
     $1,930,085?
 4
               Yes.
 5
               And there's a breakdown for the land and the
 6
     engineering. Are those the numbers that were actually
 7
     incurred?
 8
               Yes, they were.
 9
               Okay. And then I want you to take a look at page
10
     2 of Exhibit Number 83. This was a projection of what your
11
    price would be on a per-lot basis if you sold 22 lots?
12
    Α.
               Correct.
13
    Q.
               And that would be how much?
14
    Α.
               Profit?
15
               Yes -- no, how much total price sales?
    Q.
16
    A.
               2,895,000.
17
    Q.
               And the construction cost?
18
               1,930,000.
    Α.
19
               And gross profit?
    Q.
20
               820,000.
    Α.
21
               Okay. That hasn't been accomplished, correct?
    Q.
22
    Α.
               Correct.
23
    Q.
               In fact, tell the jury what the situation is
24
    today?
25
     Α.
               There are no sales. I don't know when the last
```

```
sale was, but there hasn't been any sales for a while.
 1
 2
               And do you attribute the loss of the sales to the
 3
     cutting of the trees and the flooding of your property?
 4
               MR. BAHRET: Objection.
 5
               MR. ROBON: I'll rephrase the question.
 6
     BY MR. ROBON:
 7
     Q.
               Tell us what you think has caused an absence of
 8
     sales.
 9
               MR. BAHRET: That's objectionable also.
10
               THE COURT: As the property owner and developer,
11
    he can offer his view on why he thinks the property hasn't
12
     sold. I'll overrule the objection.
13
               Well, there's a number of reasons. I don't know
14
     all the reasons, the answers to why --
    BY MR. ROBON:
15
16
               What's the principal reasons?
17
               But I think that we were hurt, sales were hurt by
18
     scalping the back of that property line from one end to the
19
     other along the railroad tracks and exposing the tracks to
20
     the trains.
21
               I'm handing you what we've marked as Exhibit 84.
22
     This is a statement from First Federal Bank. Is this where
23
     the company has its loan?
24
     Α.
               Yes, it is.
```

And let's see, this is dated April 15th of '08.

25

Ο.

```
Can you indicate to the jury the amount due at the bottom?
 1
 2
               1,324,000.
 3
               Are you current on your payments?
 4
     Α.
               No.
 5
               And can you tell the jury why you're not current
 6
     on your payments?
 7
               No sales to generate capital.
     Α.
 8
               Was there any advanced notice, to your knowledge,
 9
     prior to the city coming and cutting the trees that that
10
     was going to occur?
11
               No, there wasn't, not to my knowledge.
     Α.
12
               How did you find out about it?
13
               Just by driving by the property and crossing
14
     Bates Road, the tracks at Bates Road, I noticed that there
15
     was work being done. And then I just looked into it, drove
16
     back around Cambridge and saw that it had already been cut
17
     at that point. They were already past our subdivision and
18
     towards Toledo.
19
               Nothing you could do about it?
     Q.
20
     Α.
               No.
21
               Can you tell the jury -- explain to the jury how
22
     the cutting and the scalping of the property has impacted
23
     not only the subdivision, but you personally?
24
               MR. BAHRET: Your Honor, I object to him saying
```

it's scalping and the leading nature.

25

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

```
THE COURT: Well, and I'm not sure the impact
personally is appropriate. So for a couple reasons, I'll
sustain the objection.
BY MR. ROBON:
          Would you tell us -- can you explain to the jury
what you believe the impact was in the scalping of the
property by the City of Toledo?
          MR. BAHRET: Objection, Your Honor, to property
was scalped.
          MR. ROBON: I'll rephrase it, Your Honor.
          THE COURT: Thank you very much.
BY MR. ROBON:
          When you use the word "scalping" --
Ο.
         MR. BAHRET: He didn't, you did. I object.
Q.
          -- what did you mean?
          THE COURT: The witness did use the word.
          MR. BAHRET: I apologize.
          THE COURT: Let's not. Let's just try another
question and use another verb, please.
BY MR. ROBON:
          Can you think of another word that you would
describe what happened to the rear of the subdivision other
than scalping?
Α.
          Clear-cut.
         Clear-cut. Okay. And would you explain to the
Ο.
```

```
jury what you mean by it was clear-cut?
 1
 2
               Not select cut. Everything cut.
 3
               Nothing left?
     Q.
 4
               Nothing left.
 5
               And how has that impacted the sales of lots or
 6
     the subdivision itself?
 7
               Well, I believe that -- as I said before, I
     Α.
 8
     believe that that had -- has a lot to do with that
 9
     subdivision, that subdivision, everyone in Perrysburg knows
10
     that the tracks was behind there. Everyone from Perrysburg
11
     all the way to Rossford, both sides of the tracks, have a
12
     buffer by bramble trees and brush. You go from Perrysburg
     to Rossford, this piece of property is the only one that is
13
14
     clear-cut. Nowhere else did I see anything like this was
15
     done. And I believe that it had a lot to do with the
16
     sales.
17
               I don't know if it was you or Mr. McCarthy that
18
     took this photograph of the tree stumps that were left. Do
19
    you recall?
                          What exhibit number?
20
               THE COURT:
21
                          This is Exhibit Number 92.
               MR. ROBON:
22
               THE COURT: Thank you.
23
               I did not take that. I don't know who took that.
     Α.
24
     BY MR. ROBON:
25
     0.
               Did you see the tree stumps cut like that?
```

```
Yes, I have seen those.
 1
     Α.
 2
               And they were on this Cambridge subdivision
 3
    property?
 4
               Correct. Yes.
 5
               MR. ROBON: I have nothing further, Your Honor,
 6
     at this point.
 7
               THE COURT: Thank you.
 8
               You may cross-examine.
 9
               MR. BAHRET: Thank you, Your Honor.
10
                           CROSS EXAMINATION
11
    BY MR. BAHRET:
12
               Mr. Taylor, you and I met before, did we not?
13
               Yes.
    Α.
14
               And in fact, you gave testimony and I was asking
     Ο.
15
    questions, correct?
16
               Correct.
     Α.
17
               Did you review that transcript before testifying
18
    here today?
19
               No, I haven't.
    Α.
20
               Do you recall that the deposition was done in
21
    Mr. Robon's office?
22
    Α.
               Yes, I do.
23
    Q.
               Do you recall that it was done August 6th, 2007?
24
     Α.
               That sounds right. I don't know the date.
25
               And you were under oath?
     Q.
```

```
1
     Α.
               Yes, I was.
 2
               And of course telling the truth?
 3
     Α.
               Yes, I was.
 4
               Have you done any research since that deposition
 5
     was done that would allow you to express this expertise as
 6
     far as why lots aren't selling?
 7
     Α.
               No, I haven't.
 8
               And the reason I ask, sir, is I asked you that
 9
     question back in August of 2007. Do you recall what you
10
     told me?
11
               No, I don't.
     Α.
12
               Well, the answer is that you had absolutely no
13
     idea whatsoever.
14
               THE COURT: I -- counsel, it's standard procedure
15
     in my courtroom --
16
               MR. BAHRET: All right.
17
               THE COURT: -- that when you're going to use a
18
     deposition you provide the witness with a copy of the
19
     deposition transcript, the page and the line numbers so
20
     that we're all literally on the same page.
21
               MR. BAHRET:
                            Okay.
22
               THE COURT:
                           Thank you.
23
     BY MR. BAHRET:
24
               Do you see the page there, sir?
25
     Α.
               Yes.
```

```
1
               And the question that's highlighted, are you the
 2
     person to ask why these lots are not selling, do you see
 3
     it?
 4
     Α.
               Yes.
 5
               And you told me no?
 6
               Correct.
     Α.
 7
     Q.
               And then I said, you don't have a clue why
 8
     they're not selling, and you say, no, except for -- I don't
 9
     know the answer to that?
10
               Yes.
     Α.
11
               Have you gained knowledge since then?
     Q.
12
     Α.
               Well, when was that, a year ago, almost a year
13
     ago?
14
               Yeah, not quite.
15
               I've thought about it since a year. Yeah,
     Α.
16
     knowledge, you gain knowledge every day, I learn something
17
     new every day. Yes, I did gain knowledge from a year ago,
18
     and I have seen things, I have been out there to Cambridge
19
     since then.
20
               And you've gained knowledge as to why lots aren't
21
     selling?
22
     Α.
               You asked me my opinion, they asked me my
23
     opinion; yes, that was my opinion.
24
               Why didn't lots sell in the three years before
25
     the city project was put in?
```

```
I don't know.
 1
     Α.
 2
               No idea at all?
 3
     Α.
               I don't know.
 4
     0.
               I mean, that's the truth, though, right?
 5
     A.
               I don't know.
 6
     0.
               You don't know?
 7
     Α.
               I mean --
 8
               You don't know that you didn't sell a lot?
     Q.
 9
               Is that the question?
     Α.
10
               Yeah, do you know that there were no lots sold in
11
     Cambridge since January of 2004 when somebody that already
12
     lived there bought the empty lot next to it?
13
               I know that.
     Α.
14
               You do know that?
15
               Yes.
     Α.
16
     Q.
               Do you know why?
17
     Α.
               Do I know why --
18
     0.
               Why did nobody express interest in?
19
               No, I don't, I don't know why.
     Α.
20
     Ο.
               -- in buying the lot?
21
               No, I don't know why.
     Α.
22
     0.
               Okay. Now, you mentioned something about
23
     Cambridge was the only area that was clear-cut for this
24
     project, do you remember saying that?
25
     Α.
               Just now?
```

```
1
     Q.
               Yeah.
 2
               Yes.
 3
               The fact of the matter is that, first of all, the
 4
    picture that you showed of representative brambles or weeds
 5
     and so forth, do you remember Mr. Robon showing you that
 6
    picture?
 7
     Α.
               Yes.
 8
               That's not on Cambridge property, correct?
               I think it is. I think it's at the corner of lot
 9
10
         That's what I saw at the corner of lot 9, that
11
    monument.
12
               The bramble picture?
13
               I understand what you're saying, but the corner,
14
     the lot --
15
               THE COURT: The corner of lot 9 was Exhibit
16
    Number 41.
17
               THE WITNESS: And that is --
18
               THE COURT: Just a moment, please. I think
19
     counsel's referring to Exhibit Number 19.
20
               MR. BAHRET: That's correct. Is that up here
21
     somewhere?
22
               MR. ROBON: Yes.
23
    BY MR. BAHRET:
24
               This picture, do you remember talking about that?
25
               Yes, I do.
     Α.
```

- 1 Q. That's not on Cambridge, is it?
- 2 A. I don't know the -- I don't know.
- 3 Q. Okay. You don't know if Cambridge still has
- 4 | brambles like Exhibit Number 19 on it now?
- 5 A. It does not.
- 6 Q. So do you know this is not Cambridge then?
- 7 A. It's not Cambridge.
- 8 Q. Okay.
- 9 A. Well, I'm sorry. On the corner of lot 9, there
- 10 are still some brambles.
- 11 Q. Well, when you say --
- 12 A. And you can see the corner monument in the
- 13 picture that you showed earlier of the monument in the
- 14 corner of lot 9, probably 20-foot on our property, there's
- 15 still brambles.
- 16 0. And there's --
- 17  $\parallel$  A. And that picture there could very well be that
- 18 picture on the corner of lot 9.
- 19 Q. Do you know where that picture was?
- 20 A. No, I don't.
- 21 Q. The fact of the matter is that next to Cambridge
- 22 is the W.W. Knight Preserve?
- 23 A. No.
- 24 | Q. What's next to Cambridge?
- 25 A. Private residence, I think it's 6-acre piece.

```
1 Q. Okay. And then down the -- keep down going?
```

- 2 | A. Another residence. I think -- I think there's
- 3 three or four residences down towards Perrysburg.
- 4 | Q. And they all have thick vegetation on their land
- 5 still there now?
- 6 A. Yes, they do.
- 7 | Q. Okay. And when we talk about or when you talk
- 8 about clear-cut, the fact of the matter is that Cambridge
- 9 used to be a farm, correct?
- 10 A. Not to my knowledge. Oh, when -- years ago,
- 11 maybe 50 years ago something. What are you saying?
- 12 Q. Are you aware of the fact that your engineer
- 13 | that's going to testify in this case says that Cambridge
- 14 was a farm? If you're not aware of it just say you're not
- 15 aware of it?
- 16 A. I'm not aware of that.
- 17 Q. And typically, farms get rid of the trees?
- 18 A. Yeah. Yes.
- 19  $\parallel$  Q. A tree makes it very difficult to farm?
- 20 A. Right.
- 21 Q. And so virtually all of the trees were off the
- 22 property of Cambridge, correct?
- 23 A. No.
- 24  $\parallel$  Q. With the exception of what you say are trees at
- 25 the very back yards along those lots, the trees are gone?

```
1 A. Well, no. They're still there on all those lots.
```

- 2 The trees that are there, the only trees that were cut were
- 3 the ones for the road to put the street in and the storm
- 4 sewers and sanitary sewers. There's -- that site still has
- 5 trees on it. It's not a farm. It never was -- to my
- 6 | knowledge, it wasn't a farm.
- 7 Q. You're saying all those lots, even down where the
- 8 | cul-de-sac is, those are still heavily wooded lots?
- 9 A. No. They're not now. They were cut to put the
- 10 street in.
- 11 Q. All right.
- 12 A. What I'm saying is, you asked me if that was a
- 13 | farm, and it wasn't a farm, not for a long time ago.
- 14 Q. All right. Sir, are you -- you're saying that
- 15 | there was a encroachment, even on lots 9, 10, and 11?
- 16 A. I would say yes.
- 17  $\parallel$  Q. Well, why is your attorney telling the jury that
- 18 there wasn't?
- 19 A. I don't know the answer to that.
- 20 Q. Why is your expert saying that there wasn't an
- 21 encroachment on that end?
- 22 A. I don't know.
- 23 Q. You're not an expert in surveying, though, are
- 24 you?
- 25 A. No, I'm not.

```
Would you agree with me that if -- if a property
 1
 2
     were already cut to the very back, if somebody then removes
 3
     the adjoining property trees, now it's -- there's no
 4
     barrier; are you with me on that?
 5
               Yes.
 6
               The barrier between Cambridge and the active
 7
     trains, the active train line -- do you know what I mean --
 8
     in large part, that barrier was -- was trees and vegetation
 9
     on railroad property; would you agree with that?
10
               No, I wouldn't, I wouldn't.
11
               There's a picture of it that shows existing how
12
     it was.
              We looked at that. Yeah, did you hear my
     question?
13
14
               Yeah, you're saying -- you asked me if the
     Α.
15
     majority of the vegetation was on -- between the active
16
     railroad and the inactive railroad; is that correct?
17
               No.
                    That's not what I asked. Would you agree
18
     that the -- sorry, let me start over.
19
               Would you agree that the vegetation, including
20
     trees and all that, was on the majority of it was on the
21
     railroad property?
2.2
     Α.
               No.
23
               Are you operating with the assumption that
24
     everything between the inactive railroad and -- and
25
     Cambridge was Cambridge property?
```

- 1 A. No, I'm not, because -- the reason I say that is
- 2 because I was there when they staked that piece of ground
- 3 or the surveyors, Peterman and Associates and put the
- 4 monuments in prior to any cutting --
- 5 | Q. All right. We'll get back to that in a minute.
- 6 A. -- or any excavation on our part also.
- 7 Q. What?
- 8 A. And prior to any excavation on our part.
- 9 Q. Are you aware that Cambridge filed a drainage
- 10 plan with Wood County?
- 11 **|** A. Yes.
- 12 Q. Are you aware that in the drainage plan,
- 13 Cambridge was required to clear the last 30 feet of the
- 14 | land on Cambridge abutting the railroad?
- 15 A. No, I wasn't aware of that.
- 16 Q. Are you aware it says right on the drainage plan
- 17 clear the last 30 feet?
- 18 A. No, I wasn't.
- 19 Q. Okay. If Cambridge complied with the drainage
- 20 plan filed with Wood County, there would be nothing on
- 21 Cambridge in the last 30 feet, correct?
- 22 A. You said from property line in 30 feet?
- 23 Q. Sure is.
- 24 A. I'm not aware of that.
- 25 Q. Did you hear the question, though? If Cambridge

- 1 complied with that provision to clear the last 30 feet,
- 2 | then if whatever is removed from the railroad, there's no
- 3 barrier left?
- 4 A. That's correct.
- 5 Q. Do you know if Cambridge complied with the
- 6 drainage plan that it filed with Wood County?
- 7 A. I don't know.
- 8 Q. You'd agree that the reason plans are filed is to
- 9 get them approved and then act upon them, do what I said
- 10 I'm going to do, correct?
- 11 A. The question was that's why we file plans?
- 12 Q. You file plans and you're expected to do what you
- 13 said you were going to do?
- 14 A. That's why plans are filed.
- 15 Q. All right. And so if you did what you said you
- 16 were going to do once the railroad trees are gone, there is
- 17 no barrier left, correct?
- 18  $\parallel$  A. If we did what we? What the plans said to do.
- 19 Q. Right. Right?
- 20 A. That's correct.
- 21 Q. Okay. Let's talk about the rest of Old Granite.
- 22 Old Granite has more properties than Cambridge, correct?
- 23 A. Yes, it does.
- 24 Q. It's got a development called Rocky Ridge?
- 25 A. Yes, it does.

```
And Rocky Ridge is an albatross, correct?
 1
     Q.
 2
               I don't know the answer to that.
 3
               MR. ROBON: Objection.
 4
    BY MR. BAHRET:
 5
               Rocky Ridge --
 6
               THE COURT:
                          Well, since he already answered and
 7
     said he didn't know, I'll overrule the objection.
 8
     BY MR. BAHRET:
 9
               Rocky Ridge is in the Waterville area, correct?
     Ο.
10
               It's in Waterville Township.
11
               All right. And how are lot sales going there?
     Q.
12
     Α.
               They aren't selling.
13
               They aren't selling. That's what I thought.
                                                               In
14
     fact, not a single lot sold except the house that was
15
     already on that acreage?
16
               That's correct.
     Α.
17
     Q.
               You sold that house back to its owner?
18
               That's correct.
     Α.
19
               But you haven't -- in that development, it is
     Q.
20
     absolutely and without any equivocation, it is dead,
21
     correct?
22
    Α.
               There's no lots sold.
23
     Q.
               And you've been trying to sell lots there for at
24
     least four or five years?
```

I don't know if it's been that long.

25

Α.

- 1 | Q. Well --
- 2 A. I don't know, because I don't know the date on
- 3 that project.
- 4 Q. I thought you indicated 2003?
- 5 A. It may have been.
- 6 THE COURT: Okay. Gentleman, I have to give you
- 7 both a cautionary. You're tripping over each other. It's
- 8 going to make it very difficult for the jury to understand
- 9 and for the court reporter to accurately get down the
- 10 question and answer.
- I'm going to ask the lawyer to please allow the
- 12 witness to finish the answer. I'm going to ask the witness
- 13 to allow the lawyer to complete his question before you
- 14 begin your answer.
- 15 Thank you very much.
- MR. BAHRET: I'm sorry. He's right. If I
- 17 | interrupt you, let me know, all right. I have a tendency
- 18 to get kind of excited about it.
- 19 BY MR. BAHRET:
- 20 Q. Getting back to Rocky Ridge, that was roughly a
- 21 2003 originating project?
- 22 A. Yeah. Yes.
- 23 Q. And with the exception of the former owner
- 24 staying in the house -- basically, you bought his acreage?
- 25 A. Correct. I'm sorry, no, we didn't. No, we

- 1 didn't. That is incorrect. We bought that property from
- 2 someone else. The owner of that.
- 3 Q. Go ahead?
- 4 A. And we bought the owner of the house, the house
- 5 that's there, from him, his piece of property, like
- 6 6 acres. We bought the majority of the property from
- 7 | someone else.
- 8 Q. Okay.
- 9 A. Does that make sense? It was a 90-acre piece.
- 10 We bought -- I'm just going to say 80 acres from another
- 11 person, and this person that's in that house now, we bought
- 12 his piece of property was 15 acres. We then sold him back
- 13 | 6 acres.
- 14 Q. All right. So you combined two parcels?
- 15 A. That's correct.
- 16 Q. And then carved out his house for him to keep?
- 17 A. That's correct.
- 18 | Q. And whether you -- okay. So I now understand
- 19 | it's two parcels, but putting that fact aside, you haven't
- 20 been able to peddle even a single lot, not one?
- 21 A. Not one lot has sold, correct.
- 22 | Q. Okay. Do you have a problem with a railroad
- 23 there?
- 24 A. No, we don't.
- 25 | Q. And you have another development called -- was it

```
Birchwood Hollow?
 1
 2
               Yes.
 3
               And where is that?
 4
               In Rossford.
 5
               And how's that development doing?
 6
     Α.
               We sold -- we had commitments on all of those
 7
     lots, and we sold a third of them.
 8
               You sold ten out of 34?
 9
     Α.
               Yes, sir.
10
               And you had commitments, 24 of the lots fell back
11
     on the table because the builder went under, correct?
12
               I don't know the -- I don't know if that builder
13
     went under.
14
               Well, he stopped building, correct?
     0.
15
     Α.
               Yeah. Yes.
16
               So 24 lots over in Birchhollow are up for grabs
17
     still as we stand here today?
18
               Yes.
     Α.
19
               And you haven't been able to sell any of those in
20
     a few years either?
21
               Yes.
     Α.
2.2
     0.
               Why is that?
23
     Α.
               I don't know the answer to that.
24
     Q.
               Why are three --
25
               I don't know. In the world we live in maybe
     Α.
```

```
today.
 1
 2
     Ο.
               Say what?
 3
               Maybe it's the world we live in today.
 4
               Okay. That's kind of what I was thinking.
 5
     reason then, sir, that you have three developments, all of
 6
    which have dead in their tracks, is the environment?
 7
     Α.
               No, I wouldn't say that. I think two of them
 8
     are -- one of them is a water issue. I think Birch --
 9
    Rocky Ridge is a water issue.
10
               And what --
11
               We have sewer there. It took us a while to get
12
     the approval on sewer. Timing means a lot when you're
13
     selling lots. So --
14
               And --
     Ο.
15
               The bank -- the banker was -- had committed us to
16
     water -- money to put in water and sewer if we got it from
17
     the village. And the village approved our sewer, and we
18
    had to get an easement. It was a long-term thing. And --
19
     and then we had only wells. The only way we didn't have
20
     city water. Finally, we got approval and got city water,
21
     and the bank -- we had a problem with the bank with their
2.2
     commitment. They didn't uphold their commitment.
23
     Q.
               And just so the jury --
24
     Α.
               So it isn't what you just said.
```

Let me know when you're done.

25

Q.

- 1 A. Okay. I'm done.
- 2 | Q. So the jury doesn't get confused, what you're
- 3 | talking about, a water problem at Rocky Ridge is not a
- 4 | flooding-type water?
- 5 A. City.
- 6 Q. You don't have any -- you want to get water line
- 7 there?
- 8 A. Correct.
- 9 Q. And you don't have it?
- 10 A. Now we have the availability, we did not, though.
- 11 | Q. Has been installed?
- 12 A. It has not been installed yet, part of it has.
- 13 Q. Is Cambridge still being marketed?
- 14 A. I don't know the answer to that.
- 15 Q. Well, I noticed there weren't any for sale signs
- 16 on any of the empty lots?
- 17 A. I don't know.
- 18  $\parallel$  Q. And who would know if Cambridge was still?
- 19 A. Jack Laskey handles all of that.
- 20 Q. Is there a reason why you wouldn't be trying to
- 21 sell the lots in Cambridge?
- 22 A. There is no reason that -- to my knowledge.
- 23 Q. Does Cambridge -- are they listed with any
- 24 broker?
- 25 A. I don't know the answer to that. Jack Laskey

```
does that.
 1
 2
               You know that there were three builders that were
 3
     signed on to be the exclusive builders in Cambridge?
 4
     Α.
               Yes.
 5
     Q.
               And that was Betterman, Huffman, and who was the
 6
     third?
 7
    Α.
               Schoen.
 8
                        Ridgewater Construction?
     Q.
               Schoen.
 9
               Bridgewater.
    Α.
10
    Ο.
               And do you know that all three of them pulled out
11
    at the end of 2003?
12
    Α.
               They didn't pull out, to my knowledge --
13
               Well --
     Q.
14
               -- they bought lots.
    Α.
15
               They bought -- they each bought a lot and were
     Q.
16
     supposed to buy another, correct?
17
    Α.
               Correct.
18
               And they didn't, correct?
19
               Correct.
    Α.
20
               And do you know why they didn't fulfill what you
21
     thought was a commitment?
22
    Α.
               I think they had a problem with the world we live
23
     in.
          I think 9-11.
24
     Q.
               Right.
25
               We sold three lots prior to 9-11. And after 9-11
     Α.
```

- 1 there was a stock market problem, and they had some -- I
- 2 think they had some financial problems.
- 3  $\mathbf{Q}$ . Are you aware that the lots that they bought were
- 4 actual -- well, I'm asking you this because you just said
- 5 9-11 was a show-stopper. Are you aware that they actually
- 6 bought their lots in October of 2001?
- 7 A. Yes.
- 8 | Q. The month after 9-11 they bought lots?
- 9 A. Prior to.
- 10 Q. No. October of 2001 is what the document says.
- 11 Are you aware of that?
- 12 A. No. That might have been closing, yeah, but they
- 13 bought them -- they had a purchase agreement with us prior
- 14 | to that, and they up held their agreement.
- 15 Q. Okay. Are you aware, sir, that --
- 16 A. I'm not aware of the closing date, no, I'm not.
- 17  $\parallel$  Q. Are you aware that on December 29, 2003 all three
- 18 of those builders canceled their contracts for the second
- 19 | lots and their deposit money was refunded?
- 20 A. No, I wasn't aware.
- 21 Q. You'd agree that not one of them has done
- 22 anything there since December of 2003, correct?
- 23 A. No, I wouldn't agree to that.
- 24 0. You don't?
- 25 A. No.

- 1 0. What?
- 2 A. I think Bill Schoen built something in there.
- 3 | Q. When did Bill Schoen --
- 4 A. I don't know the date, but I know Bill Schoen
- 5 built one of those houses.
- 6 Q. But you don't know when it was?
- 7 | A. No, I don't.
- 8 | Q. All right. Would you agree, sir -- and we'll get
- 9 those documents through Mr. Laskey, I guess. He'd be the
- 10 one to ask about sales histories?
- 11 A. Yes, sir.
- 12 Q. Would you agree that you can hear the train
- 13 | whistle if you're outside standing in the development even
- 14 before the city work was done?
- 15 A. Yes.
- 16 Q. And would you agree that you could see the train
- 17 at least part of the train, before the city work was done?
- 18 A. Yes.
- 19 Q. And obviously, anybody would know there's trains
- 20 going by behind that development even before the city work
- 21 was done?
- 22 | A. Yes.
- 23 Q. In fact, you had an occasion to see the train
- 24 | from one of the houses there, did you not?
- 25 A. I don't understand the question.

```
1
               Were you in one of the houses before the city
 2
     work was done?
 3
     Α.
               Yes.
 4
               And saw the train?
 5
     A.
               Yes.
 6
     0.
               From the house?
 7
     A.
               Yes, from the first floor, yes.
 8
     Q.
               Okay?
 9
               Street level.
     Α.
10
               And you'd also agree that if you were standing in
11
     what would be the yards -- I know there's not yards there
12
     as such -- but if you were standing in the yards, lots 9
13
     through 16, you could see the train?
14
               Today? Yes.
     Α.
15
               Before the city work was done?
16
               Before the city work was done? Well, it was
17
     covered up and when you're in the backyards of nine and 16,
18
     it was covered up by brush.
19
               But you could still see part of the train?
     Q.
20
               Yes, you could -- yes, you could.
21
               All right. What I'm getting at, sir, I know
     Q.
22
     you're saying at least there's a partial film there, but
23
     it's not like just a concrete wall?
24
               Correct.
25
               You could see and know there's a train going
     0.
```

```
there?
 1
 2
               That's correct.
 3
     Q.
               Sir, you said you're a 50/50 partner with
 4
    Mr. Laskey?
 5
     Α.
 6
               When did you come to that knowledge?
 7
               I don't know. I don't know the date. Is that
     Α.
 8
     what you want, a date?
 9
               Yeah, when did you figure out that you were a
10
     50/50 partner?
11
               I don't know the -- I don't know the date. I
12
     don't know the answer to that.
13
               Okay. That same deposition this is page 52, can
     Ο.
14
    you see it?
15
    Α.
               Yeah.
16
               Do you see the down towards line 25 I asked, are
17
    you a 50/50 -- are you 50/50 percent? And you see the
18
    prior question, to put it in context, we're talking about
     Jack Laskey?
19
20
               Yes.
     Α.
21
               How did you answer that question, do you
     Q.
22
     remember, are you 50/50 partners?
23
    Α.
               I don't know how I answered that.
24
               Do you know now?
25
    A.
               I know -- I think I'm 50/50 partner. I might
```

- 1 have an some documents of a corporate agreement or
- 2 something. Maybe he has 1 percent more than I do. I don't
- 3 know the answer to that.
- 4 Q. Okay. And so even --
- 5 A. I could have been wrong. I mean, I didn't know
- 6 | then because I did not have our corporate papers to -- I
- 7 don't have them today either, so I really don't know. I
- 8 might be wrong. He might have 1 percent more than I do. I
- 9 don't know.
- 10 0. Do you remember talking about your bank statement
- 11 and the loan to the bank? It was Exhibits 83 and 84?
- 12 A. No, I don't.
- 13 | Q. You don't remember Mr. Robon talking about that
- 14 with you here today?
- 15 A. Okay, yes, I do.
- 16 Q. Okay. The fact of the matter is, since you
- 17 | didn't sell any lots in Birch Hollow between '04 and '06,
- 18 | we know you didn't sell any lots in Rocky Ridge, correct?
- 19 A. Correct.
- 20 | Q. And you also didn't sell any lots in Cambridge
- 21 between 2000 -- January 2004 and the spring of '06 when the
- 22 clearing was done?
- 23 A. Yes.
- 24 | Q. So we got at least two-and-a-half years of no
- 25 sales anywhere for Old Granite, correct?

```
1 A. I'm assuming that's correct.
```

- 2 | Q. Okay. And so how were you servicing that debt at
- 3 | that time?
- 4 | A. I don't know. I wasn't -- Jack took care of
- 5 | that.
- 6 Q. Sir, was there any kind of a water ponding issue
- 7 on the back of lot 16 or 15 before the city work was done?
- 8 A. No. I don't think there was.
- 9 Q. Okay. Why did a guy testify here this morning
- 10 | that for as long as he's been alive, and he's over 50 years
- 11 old, there had been water back there?
- 12 A. You're asking me why he said that? I don't know.
- 13 | Q. Why I can't -- why would the guy that lives
- 14 there, that has lived there his entire life, tell us
- 15 there's always been standing water back there?
- 16 A. I don't have a clue why he would say that.
- 17 | Q. Why would Old Granite's expert witness, McCarthy,
- 18 | say that there's always been standing water back there, he
- 19 | just claims it's worse now?
- 20 A. I don't know why he would say that.
- 21 Q. Okay. Well, the fact of the matter is, you just
- 22 | don't know if there's water back there or ponding issue
- 23 | back there or not prior to spring of 2006?
- 24 A. There wasn't when we bought the property,
- 25 standing water on those lots.

```
1
               Okay.
               Those lots were -- that -- that area back there
 2
 3
     was draining.
 4
               Are you aware of the fact that Mr. Laskey
 5
     testified in discovery in this case that he consulted
 6
     McCarthy about a water problem in those lots before the
 7
     city cut the drainage culvert?
 8
               No, I was not aware of that.
 9
               Okay. Are you aware of the fact that McCarthy,
10
     both of them, the guy that lives there in that lot 15
11
     house, that's Mike McCarthy -- let me take them one at a
12
     time. Are you aware of the fact that Mike McCarthy says
1.3
     that there was standing water in his backyard in lot 16
14
     before the city put their work in?
15
               No, I wasn't aware of that.
     Α.
16
               And engineers -- I already asked you, you were
17
     unaware that his father, the engineer, acknowledges there
18
     was a ponding problem as well?
19
               I did not -- I did not know anything about that.
     Α.
20
               Are you aware that you are the only person on the
21
     spinning globe that says there wasn't a ponding problem
2.2
     before the city work was done?
23
               MR. ROBON:
                          Objection.
24
               THE COURT:
                          I'll sustain. You can rephrase the
25
     question, please.
```

```
BY MR. BAHRET:
 1
 2
               Are you aware of anybody other than you that says
 3
     there was not a water ponding problem on those lots before
 4
     the city work was done?
 5
               I'm not aware of that.
 6
               MR. BAHRET: Thank you.
 7
               THE COURT: Any redirect?
 8
               MR. ROBON:
                           Sure.
 9
                         REDIRECT EXAMINATION
10
    BY MR. ROBON:
11
               Tom, when he talks about Rocky Ridge, which is a
     subdivision out in Waterville Township, no homes could be
12
13
     built on those lots, could they?
14
               No, they couldn't.
     Α.
15
               And could you tell the jury why you could not
     Q.
16
     build on those lots?
               Because of the soil conditions wouldn't -- the
17
18
     county wouldn't give us septic tanks, the ground would not
19
    perk.
20
               "Perk" means?
     Q.
21
               Percolate for a septic system.
    Α.
22
     Q.
               Mean it was too much clay?
23
    Α.
               Rock.
24
     Q.
               Okay. And what was --
25
               And water, no -- no --
     Α.
```

```
And water, what do you mean?
 1
     Q.
 2
               City water.
 3
               Is it fair to say that you could not get city
     Q.
 4
    water for several years?
 5
               That's correct.
 6
     O.
               And then when you finally got approval, you were
 7
     in default of a bank loan and the bank?
 8
               MR. BAHRET: Objection.
 9
               MR. ROBON: He raised the issue.
10
               THE COURT: I know. I think the objection's
11
    based on leading.
12
               MR. BAHRET: Correct.
13
               MR. ROBON: I'll rephrase the question.
14
    BY MR. ROBON:
15
               What did the bank tell you after you finally got
     Q.
16
     approval to have the water line installed in Rocky Ridge?
17
               MR. BAHRET: Objection, hearsay.
18
               THE COURT: Try it one more time.
19
    BY MR. ROBON:
20
               Okay. Why couldn't you install the water line in
21
     the Rocky Ridge subdivision?
2.2
     Α.
               The bank wouldn't fund it. They said originally
23
24
               MR. BAHRET: Objection.
25
                           I'm sorry. You can't say what
               THE COURT:
```

- somebody told you. That's hearsay. But your answer stands 1 2 as is. 3 BY MR. ROBON: 4 And when Mr. Bahret asked you all these questions 5 about marketing and selling lots, you don't really know 6 when the last lot sold in Birch Hollow, do you? 7 Α. No, I don't. 8 And would you tell the jury why you don't know? 9 I don't handle anything with sales or marketing. 10 I'm not around. I'm in Columbus, Ohio. There's no work 11 for me in this town. So in the last -- it's been a year 12 now, I've been in Columbus, Ohio working. 13 Is it fair to say that divvying up work, as 14 Laskey does the business work and the sales and you do the 15 construction? 16 That's correct. 17 Now, he brought up this drainage that he says 18 you -- you filed in Wood County. He didn't produce this 19 map that says you've got to clear the last 30 feet? 20 Α. No. 21 Did you clear 30 feet of the rear of all those Q. 22 lots? 23 Α. No, we did not.
- Q. You did not. Was there any intention to clear
- 25 those?

```
Not to my knowledge.
 1
 2
               And today when we go out to lot 15 which has got
 3
     the spec house on it, there were all kinds of trees on lot
 4
     16, weren't there?
 5
               Yes, there was.
 6
               And there was some trees spaced throughout the
 7
    subdivision?
 8
               And there still are, yes. I think what the
 9
     county requires or asked on the plan was where we ran a
10
     storm sewer back to the -- those four catch basins that you
11
     show on the map.
12
               Would you show us over here?
13
               I think that that's what the county -- not the
14
     whole -- not the whole length of the property. I don't
15
    know.
16
               MR. BAHRET: I figured you didn't know based on
17
    your answer.
18
    BY MR. ROBON:
19
               You're talking about these four catch basins?
     Q.
20
               Correct.
     Α.
21
               That they wanted to -- trees cleared from the
2.2
    street there?
23
    Α.
               Yes.
24
               You had to do that anyway to put the drain in,
```

25

didn't you?

```
1
     Α.
               Correct.
 2
     Ο.
               Okay.
 3
               MR. ROBON: I have no further questions, Your
 4
    Honor.
 5
               THE COURT: Anything further?
 6
                         RECROSS EXAMINATION
 7
    BY MR. BAHRET:
 8
               Mr. Taylor, I think you already said, the fact of
     the matter is, you don't know what the drainage plan filed
 9
10
    with the county required?
11
               I beg your pardon? I don't understand the
12
     question.
13
               You don't know what the drainage plan that was
14
     filed with Wood County required?
15
    Α.
               Today, right now?
16
     Q.
               Yes.
17
    Α.
               No, I don't.
18
               And you don't know what was represented to be
    Q.
19
     cleared on the back of the lots, if anything, you just
20
    don't know?
21
               I don't know. No, I don't. I don't have the
22
    plan in front of me. I can't answer that correctly.
23
     Q.
               All right. And would you agree that Peterman
24
     prepared the drainage plan?
25
     Α.
              Yes, they did.
```

```
1
               And the guy, Todd Jenkins, that prepared it, he's
 2
     the guy that can speak to what is required?
 3
     Α.
               I would think so.
 4
     Ο.
               Okay. And you know he is the guy that prepared
 5
     it, right?
 6
     Α.
               Yes.
 7
     Q.
               Because you retained them, correct?
 8
     Α.
               That's correct.
 9
               And that was part of your task in this
10
     partnership?
11
               That's correct.
     Α.
12
     Q.
               And you relied upon Jenkins, who will testify
13
     here and will have that plan, you relied on him, correct?
14
               Yes.
     Α.
15
               He's the man to speak to that, right?
     Q.
16
               Him or the county -- the county engineer --
     Α.
17
     Q.
               Thank --
18
               -- inspector has to say.
     Α.
19
               THE COURT: Thank you. You may step down.
20
               Plaintiff may call its next witness.
21
               MR. ROBON: Can we approach for a second, Your
22
     Honor?
23
               THE COURT:
                            Sure.
24
                    (A side bar conference was had off the
25
                    record.)
```

MR. ROBON: We would like to call Christy 1 2 Soncrant upon cross-examination. 3 THE COURT: Ladies and gentlemen, the plaintiff 4 is entitled to take a representative of the defendant and 5 to examine that representative, that employee. 6 I indicated to counsel that I expected to take 7 our lunch break in about a half an hour, which is when your lunch is expected to arrive. And so we'll take a break in 8 the testimony at that point. The plaintiff has other 9 10 witnesses coming this afternoon. And it may be that we 11 will have this witness stand down, literally, and take your seat, the other people when they arrive here, so that we 12 can keep things moving, just wanted to give you a heads up 13 14 on that. 15 CROSS EXAMINATION 16 BY MR. ROBON: 17 Q. It's Mrs. Soncrant now, I understand. 18 Yes, it is. Α. 19 And in 2006 would you tell the jury how old you Q. 20 were? 21 I was 33. Α. 22 Ο. And your only job since getting out of school is 23 with the City of Toledo? 24 Α. Yes, it is. 25 In the engineering department? Q.

- 1 A. Technically, I was at water distribution and then
- 2 the mayor combined all of the engineers and made
- 3 engineering services, so.
- 4 | Q. And today who do you report to?
- 5 A. I have a commissioner of engineering services.
- 6 0. And is that Mr. Moleen?
- 7 A. Yes, it is.
- 8 Q. And who did you report to in 2006?
- 9 A. 2006, the commissioner was Warren Henry.
- 10 Q. Were either of those gentleman ever out to the
- 11 Cambridge subdivision site?
- 12 A. Warren Henry may have been. I don't believe that
- 13 Moleen has.
- 14 | Q. So the commissioners of engineering of the city,
- 15 ∥ even with this lawsuit pending, you can't testify have ever
- 16 come out to this site?
- 17 A. I am not sure.
- 18 | Q. When -- can you tell the jury when you first
- 19 became aware of a problem with the owners of the Cambridge
- 20 | subdivision?
- 21 A. What kind of a problem are you --
- 22 | Q. Any kind of problem, when did you first become
- 23 aware?
- 24 A. John McCarthy, who is the engineer for the
- 25 subdivision, had -- I don't remember if he called me or

- what it was, and had said that he had an issue with the clearing and with a possible pipe.
- 3 | Q. Okay. And is it true that he e-mailed you at
- 4 | least eight to ten times during the spring and summer of
- 5 2006 about those problems?
- 6 A. We did have e-mails back and forth.
- 7 Q. And isn't it true that the city did absolutely
- 8 nothing about those problems that were brought to your
- 9 attention?
- 10 A. No, I don't believe that to be true.
- 11 Q. Well, then, why don't you tell this jury what the
- 12 city, in fact, did?
- 13 A. The city met with Mr. McCarthy and listened to
- 14 his thoughts, and --
- 15 Q. Physically, I want to know what you did on the
- 16 site?
- 17 MR. BAHRET: Your Honor, I'd like her to be able
- 18 to answer the question.
- 19 THE COURT: Well, let's -- well, let's let the
- 20 | two of you stop interrupting her and allow her the chance
- 21 to answer the question.
- 22 A. I met with Mr. McCarthy on site a few times,
- 23 spoke with him on the phone.
- 24 | Q. Did you -- were you trying to pacify him?
- 25 MR. BAHRET: Your Honor, could we let her finish?

```
1
               MR. ROBON:
                           It's cross-examination, Your Honor.
 2
               THE COURT: I understand, but we're going to
 3
     allow, as we do all witnesses, the opportunity to finish
 4
     their answer as long as they're being responsive, and she's
 5
    being responsive.
 6
               You may continue.
 7
     Α.
               I'm sorry, what was the --
 8
    BY MR. ROBON:
 9
               I'll rephrase the question. Did the city do any
10
     type of physical work -- have any of its contractors do
11
     anything to alleviate the problems that were brought to the
12
     city's attention in the spring and summer of 2006? You can
13
     answer it yes or no. If the answer is yes, tell the jury
14
     what they did.
15
               Okay. I feel that we tried --
     Α.
16
               No. Yes or no. Did you do any physical things
17
    near or about the Cambridge subdivision to cure any of the
18
    problems that were brought to the city's attention, yes or
19
    no?
20
               MR. BAHRET: Your Honor --
21
                           I'm -- I'll allow her to answer yes
               THE COURT:
22
     or no and explain her answer.
23
     Α.
               Physically, no.
24
               Thank you. Is the answer because you didn't
25
    believe what was being said about the clearing and about
```

```
the flooding problem?
 1
 2
               We did not agree.
 3
               Did you believe it, yes or no?
     Q.
 4
               We did not believe that we cut down trees on
 5
     their property, and we did not believe that we caused
 6
     flooding on their property.
 7
     Q.
               So you did nothing?
 8
               So we did nothing.
 9
               Now, have you read Nick Nye's deposition from
10
     Peterman and Associates?
11
     Α.
               No, I have not.
12
     Q.
               Have you been told what he testified to?
13
               No, I have not.
     Α.
14
               Have you seen the survey that he prepared?
15
               You gave me a -- you showed me a survey at the
     Α.
16
     deposition. I don't know if that's the one you're speaking
17
     of.
18
               Let me hand you what we've marked as Exhibit
     Ο.
19
    Number 7. Have you seen that document previously?
20
               Yes, I have.
     Α.
21
               And doesn't that document show that the city
     encroached by several feet onto the rear of lots 12 through
22
23
     15?
24
               This is showing that's the property line, and
25
     then -- oh that's --
```

- 1 | Q. You can answer the question yes or no.
- 2 | A. You'll -- I'm trying to figure out what the
- 3 drawing is. Thank you.
- 4 | Q. Let me ask this question. "Do you know how to
- 5 read a survey?
- 6 A. Yes, I do.
- 7 | Q. Okay. Does that survey show that there had been
- 8 encroachments by the City of Toledo cutting down dozens and
- 9 dozens of brambles and trees on the property of the
- 10 Cambridge subdivision?
- 11 A. No. The only thing it shows is that this area
- 12 was disturbed. It does not show who it was disturbed by.
- 13 Q. So your defense is that Mr. McCarthy cut the
- 14 | trees down?
- 15 A. I'm not saying that.
- 16 Q. There's --
- 17  $\| A$ . It just says that the area is disturbed.
- 18 | Q. Is the city denying that it did this disturbing?
- 19 You can answer yes or no.
- 20 | A. Is the city denying that it did the disturbing?
- 21 Q. Yes.
- 22 | A. I don't know whether it did it or not.
- 23 Q. You indicated in your deposition that you went
- 24 | out to this site and drove -- I forgot what type of
- 25 | vehicle -- down the path of the former railroad?

- 1 A. Yes, I did.
- 2 | Q. And that you actually did see the back of the
- 3 Cambridge subdivision?
- 4 A. Yes, I did.
- 5 | Q. Okay. Did you know -- were you a homeowner at
- 6 | that time?
- 7 A. Yes.
- 8 Q. Did you know that leaving trees in the back of a
- 9 home might increase its value?
- 10 MR. BAHRET: Objection.
- 11 THE COURT: Overruled. She may answer.
- 12 A. I do not really know.
- 13 BY MR. ROBON:
- 14 Q. When you saw the Cambridge subdivision, isn't it
- 15 true that it didn't show up on any of the city drawings for
- 16 the contractors?
- 17 A. It just showed a property line.
- 18 | Q. Right. Did you look for survey markers or
- 19 | boundary markers at the Cambridge subdivision site?
- 20 A. The surveyors do that.
- 21 Q. Did you?
- 22 A. No, I did not personally.
- 23 Q. Did you even get out of your vehicle?
- 24 A. Not when we were driving by.
- 25 Q. Okay. And that's before anything occurred,

```
correct?
 1
 2
               That is correct.
 3
               Did you see the manhole that is located just past
 4
     lot 16 that was on the railroad right of way when you first
 5
     drove down this property?
 6
               I wasn't looking for a manhole. I don't -- if I
 7
     saw it -- I might have seen it, I do not recall whether I
 8
     saw it or not.
 9
               Did you ever get out of your car and walk behind
10
     the Cambridge subdivision?
11
               Before construction began?
     Α.
12
     Q.
               Before construction.
13
               No, I did not.
     Α.
14
               Did you suggest to the contractor -- let me
     Ο.
15
     phrase it this way: Did you have the right to have
16
     modifications to the contract telling them to stay away so
17
     many feet from a property line and things like that?
18
               The city has the right to make a modification to
     Α.
19
     plans.
20
               Right. And you had that right in your contract?
21
     Α.
               Yes.
22
     Ο.
               Okay. And my question to you is, when the tree
23
     clearing took place, you knew that a residential
24
     subdivision was abutting the CSX right of way, correct?
```

Yes, I knew there was a subdivision there.

25

Α.

```
1
               And isn't it true that neither you, Mr. Moleen,
 2
     the other gentleman who was the commissioner of
 3
     engineering, Joe Crandall, who was the coordinator, not one
 4
     person within the City of Toledo administration suggested
 5
     that they be careful by the Cambridge subdivision and not
 6
     cut trees on somebody else's property?
 7
               We did.
     Α.
 8
               Is that true?
 9
               It would be true that we will not want them to
10
     cut trees on someone else's property.
11
     Ο.
               I understand that. My question is, did you
12
     affirmatively tell the contractor stay 5 feet away, 10 feet
13
     away?
14
               We did not tell the contractor how far to stay
     Α.
15
     away, no.
16
               And isn't it true that the City of Toledo
17
     employees marked the survey line --
18
               That is true.
     Α.
19
               -- of what should be cut?
     Q.
20
               That is true.
     Α.
21
               And isn't it true that was it you were in charge;
2.2
     is that fair to say?
23
     A.
               Yes, I was the project engineer for construction.
24
               Isn't it fair to say that you told Ric Man
25
     Construction to cut right up to where the flags were that
```

```
the city marked?
 1
 2
               Actually, no. When it comes to survey, our
 3
     surveyors -- the contractor pretty much talks to the
 4
     surveyors and us engineers leave that surveying up to the
 5
     city surveyor.
 6
               Are you denying that the contractor was not
 7
     authorized to -- or was authorized to cut up to the flags
 8
     that the city marked, the surveyors marked?
 9
               Will you please ask that again?
10
               Are you denying that the contractor had
11
     authorization to cut up to where the flags were that the
12
     city --
               No, I'm not.
13
14
               Okay. After the complaints came in from
15
     Mr. McCarthy as the consultant for Old Granite, did the
16
     City of Toledo engage in outside surveying company to check
17
     the work of Peterman and Associates?
18
               No, they did not.
     Α.
19
               So you have no evidence to show that whatever
20
     Peterman tells this jury is inaccurate?
21
               MR. BAHRET: Objection.
22
               THE COURT: Overruled.
               I believe that our surveyors, Bob Babcock, the
23
24
     surveyor for the City of Toledo, went back out and did
25
     some -- did some checks with it. So he would have
```

knowledge. 1 BY MR. ROBON: 2 3 Is it fair to say that the City of Toledo had a Q. 4 \$50 million project putting this water main in, did not go 5 out and spend a couple thousand dollars to get an outside 6 surveying opinion as to whether or not the city encroached 7 on someone else's land; true or false? 8 That whole question is not true, the statement. 9 This project was 13 million. 10 0. This segment of the project? 11 This segment, the project was 13 million. Α. 12 Q. The whole project was 50 million? 13 Yes. Α. 14 Let's not mislead the jury --Ο. 15 MR. BAHRET: Objection. 16 THE COURT: Okay, folks, I'm going to ask you to 17 disallow counsel's remark. 18 And I'm going to ask you to please stop tripping 19 over each other. Lawyers, take a breath. Let the witness 20 finish his -- her answer, please. Thank you. 21 BY MR. ROBON: 22 Ο. Why did you tell the jury this was a \$13 million 23 project when it was really 50 million? 24 Because this section was 13, and we're talking 25 about this section.

- 1 This section. Isn't it true that the CSX 2 railroad was paid \$2.1 million for an easement to put the 3 water main in? 4 Yes, that's true. 5 Isn't it true that this water main was put in by 6 the City of Toledo for profit, to sell water to the 7 communities in northern Wood County? 8 Actually, this water line was put in to maintain 9 our system, maintain the integrity of it. We have two 10 river crossings now. If one breaks, part of the city will 11 go out of water. So this added a third river crossing. 12 You're not answering my question. 13 MR. BAHRET: Objection. 14 BY MR. ROBON: 15 Was this water main put in so that the City of Ο. 16 Toledo could continue to sell water to the communities in 17 northern Wood County, yes or no? 18 In my opinion, no. Α. 19 Does it serve that purpose? Q. 20 It serves water to the City of Toledo residents. Α. 21 And does it serve northern Wood County residences? 22 23 Α. Northern Wood County, is Rossford northern Wood
- 25 Q. You don't know?

24

County?

- 1 A. I think Rossford is in Wood County.
- 2 | Q. Did you grow up in the Toledo area?
- 3 A. In Toledo, south Toledo, yes. I'm a city girl.
- 4 Q. And you don't know if Rossford's in Wood County
- 5 or Lucas County. And you were the engineer that was in
- 6 charge of this project through the city of Rossford?
- 7 | A. Yes, that doesn't mean I need to know if Rossford
- 8 is in Lucas County or Wood County.
- 9 Q. Would you agree with me that when the city sells
- 10 water to nonresidents of Toledo, they mark up the price?
- 11 A. Yes, they do.
- 12 | Q. And did the City of Toledo send notices to the
- 13 adjacent property owners that you were going cut the trees
- 14 and install this large water main behind their properties?
- 15  $\| A$ . The City of Toledo did do a notice, yes.
- 16 Q. And they did a notice. Did they send a letter
- 17 | out to anybody?
- 18 A. We did not send a letter out.
- 19 0. And isn't it true that the notice that was
- 20 publicized was publicized in the City of Toledo, not in
- Wood County?
- 22 | A. It was publicized in the City of Toledo Blade,
- 23 | which is distributed to outside communities also.
- 24  $\parallel$  Q. And are you aware of the number of people that
- 25 | are boycotting the Blade?

```
1
               No, I am not.
 2
               MR. BAHRET: Objection.
 3
               THE COURT: Yes, already answered. Overruled.
 4
     BY MR. ROBON:
 5
               How often were you out at the site of
 6
     construction during the summer of 2006, daily basis, once a
 7
     week?
 8
               Maybe once a week.
     Α.
 9
               And the rest of the time, you were in your
     Ο.
10
     office?
11
               Or I had other projects going on also.
     Α.
12
     Q.
               Oh, how many projects did the city assign to you?
13
               There was other sections of this water line going
     Α.
14
     on.
15
               When you became cognizant of the possible
16
     encroachment on the property of Cambridge, did you discuss
17
     it with your superiors?
18
               Yes, I did.
     Α.
19
               And what were their instructions to you, ignore
     Q.
20
     it?
21
               No. They were -- they knew I had met with the
22
     property owner, and was trying to get their opinions and
23
     figure out if there really was a problem or not.
24
               And until today, you've never acknowledged that
25
     perhaps there was a problem, correct?
```

- I have not acknowledged that. 1 2 Oh, you have not acknowledged it. So you're 3 saying that Peterman survey is wrong? 4 I am not saying whether there is a problem or 5 not. I do not know for sure. 6 Ο. So you're not acknowledging that the city did 7 anything wrong? 8 Correct. 9 And did that directive come from the mayor, 10 Mr. Finkbeiner? 11 I don't. Α. 12 Q. Or from whom? 13 I don't talk to the mayor. Α. 14 O. Who gave you that instruction? 15 MR. BAHRET: Objection. 16 THE COURT: Overruled. 17 No one gave me an instruction. 18 BY MR. ROBON: 19 Did you recommend that to your superiors? Q.
- 20 A. The superiors saw the same facts that I was
- 21 Schoen.
- 22 Q. My question is, did you recommend to your
- 23 superiors that you not acknowledge liability?
- 24 A. No.
- 25 Q. You made that determination yourself?

```
That's my opinion.
 1
     Α.
 2
               And your superiors didn't overrule you, correct?
 3
     Α.
               That is correct.
 4
     0.
               Do you have any experience in surveying yourself?
 5
               Just the one class I took at U.T. going through
 6
     college.
 7
     Q.
               Have you ever looked through a transit or
 8
     anything like that?
 9
               Actually, yes.
     Α.
10
     Ο.
               Yes?
11
               Uh-huh.
     Α.
12
     Q.
               On a site?
13
               At the university.
     Α.
14
     0.
               While you were in school?
15
               While I was in school.
     Α.
16
     Q.
               So you knew what a transit was?
17
     Α.
               Yes.
18
               Now, you will agree with me that the city
     Ο.
     actually filled one of the railroad ditches, did it not,
19
20
     with the access fill dirt caused by the digging of this
     66-inch water main?
21
2.2
     Α.
               When we were installing the pipe?
23
     Q.
               Yes.
24
               How we explained that, yes, when they didn't have
```

enough room because the right of way was so narrow there,

25

```
so to install it during the day, they'd fill it in so they
 1
 2
     could drive their trucks over, and then when they were
 3
     done, they redig it.
 4
               And isn't it a fact that several hundred feet
 5
     towards Ford Road has not been dug out, it's actually solid
 6
    ground level?
 7
               Anything that we would have filled in, we would
    have dug back out.
 8
 9
               Are you telling me that I'm imagining things when
     I don't see a ditch there now?
10
11
               MR. BAHRET: Objection. Your Honor, I object for
12
     two reasons.
                   One, it's totally irrelevant.
13
               MR. ROBON: I'll rephrase.
14
               MR. BAHRET: Let me finish. It's totally
15
     irrelevant and nothing's going to -- it has nothing to do
16
     with any issue on this case, and it has nothing to do with
17
    plaintiff's property.
18
               THE COURT: Let's address the relevancy area
19
     then, what's the relevancy?
20
                           The question is, what authority she
               MR. ROBON:
21
    has, Your Honor, and how she supervised her actions.
22
               THE COURT: I'm struggling to find the
23
     connection.
24
               MR. ROBON: I'll rephrase the question.
25
               THE COURT: Thank you.
```

BY MR. ROBON: 1 2 Mrs. Soncrant, many times before the tree cutting 3 occurred were you actually on the site between Bates Road 4 and Ford Road, near the Cambridge subdivision? 5 I believe just the one time I had driven it. 6 Just the one time. When was the next time 7 that -- this would have been sometime in the spring or late 8 fall of 2005, spring 2006 that you drove through, correct?

A. Correct.

9

- 10 Q. And when was the next time that you stepped foot onto that site near the Cambridge subdivision?
- 12 A. This would have been after they cleared it, after 13 they had cleared it.
- Q. After they had cleared it. And did you come out because of Mr. McCarthy's complaints?
- 16 A. I don't think that was the next time. I think I
  17 had come out to see them unloading pipe or bringing some
  18 materials, that was possibly the next time, actually.
- 19 Q. So you didn't come out as a result of
- 20 Mr. McCarthy's complaints?
- 21 A. I did come out for that also.
- Q. Which was it? You came out to see the pipe or you came out as a result of his complaints?
- MR. BAHRET: I object. He's arguing and he switched the question. The prior question was, when did

- you first come out after the clearing. 1 2 MR. ROBON: And the answer was to see the pipe. 3 I believe I went out and saw the pipe, which was Α. on the White Road side, not towards Cambridge's, further 4 5 the other direction, so I was in that area, you said, not 6 by Cambridge property, though. 7 BY MR. ROBON: 8 Okay. And those pipes are about 6-feet high? 9 Yes. Α. 10 And how deep in the ground are they? 11 We usually do about 5-foot of cover minimum is 12 what we require. 13 And I want you to tell the jury, did you, as a 14 city engineer, contact the water and sewer district 15 engineers in Wood County prior to opening any excavation on 16 the CSX right of way? 17 Α. They --18 Yes or no? Ο. 19 Did I, personally? Α. 20 Q. Yes. 21 Α. No. 22 Ο. Did you contact the Wood County engineer, Ray 23 Huber or his assistant Glenn Agner, before you commenced 24 any excavation on the railroad right of way?
- 25 A. Personally, I was not the first to call him, no.

```
1
               Tell the jury when you first became aware that
 2
     there was a 24-inch diameter drain pipe going from the
 3
     manhole on the railroad property directly in the path of
 4
     your 66-inch water main?
 5
               We had called a meeting with John McCarthy, which
 6
     was the engineer for Cambridge, myself, our construction
 7
     technician who is on site on a daily basis, and then the
 8
     contractor and Wood County, Ray Huber, the engineer that
     he's speaking of. We all met on site. And that is when
 9
10
     Mr. Huber brought out a set of plans that had Schoen that.
11
     It was not depicted on the drawings that the city had.
12
               And the plans -- I'm going to hand you what we've
13
     marked as Exhibit 45. Are these the drawings that were
14
     given to you by the Wood County engineer, yes?
15
               I'm just looking to make sure they should have
     Α.
16
            This looks like they were the railroad ones.
17
               Okay. And doesn't the plan show here a pipe
18
     going underneath the old railroad tracks for drainage from
19
     the manhole to the ditch adjacent to the CSX active track?
20
               Yes, it does show a pipe.
21
               And could you cut trees -- explain to the jury,
22
     when it shows a 24-inch-in-diameter pipe in these plans,
23
     why the City of Toledo severed the pipe and didn't relocate
24
     it?
25
               Because at this meeting -- these plans just show
     Α.
```

that there's a line here. It doesn't show a manhole or 1 2 where it could have gone to. When we met with Mr. Huber, 3 he actually -- I believe, he used to work for the railroad 4 a long time ago. And he told us that normally, the 5 railroad doesn't let anyone drain onto their property. 6 believed that that pipe was not in use and that it -- when 7 it did work, it would have drained the railroad stuff and 8 no other neighbors. 9 You just told the jury that that plan doesn't 10 show the manhole, correct? 11 Α. Yes, I do not see a manhole. 12 Wasn't the manhole like 5 feet away from where 13 that pipe was being served, yes or no? 14 It was a little more than that, but it was --Α. 7 feet? 15 Q. 16 It was close to it. Α. 17 So you knew of the existence of the manhole, did Q. 18 you not? 19 Α. Yes. 20 Did you stick a camera down in the manhole to see 21 where the water came in to the manhole? 2.2 Α. We did not stick a camera in there, no. 23 Did you know what a manhole was for? Q. 24 Α. Yes, I do.

It's for water to collect, correct?

25

Q.

- 1 A. Correct.
- 2 | Q. Did you know how many pipes were in the bottom of
- 3 | the manhole?
- 4 A. The manhole was filled with water.
- 5 Q. I understand that. So there was water in the
- 6 manhole?
- 7 A. Yes, so at that time, no.
- 8 Q. Did you pump out the water so you could see the
- 9 bottom of the manhole?
- 10 A. At that point in time we did not.
- 11 Q. Okay. So you didn't know where the water went
- 12 | from the manhole, correct?
- 13 A. That is correct.
- 14 Q. You didn't know how the water got to the manhole,
- 15 | correct?
- 16 A. Correct.
- 17 Q. You didn't know the depth of the manhole,
- 18 correct?
- 19 A. Correct.
- 20 | Q. You didn't know how deep the water was in the
- 21 manhole, correct?
- 22 A. The bottom of the water, correct.
- 23 Q. And isn't it fair to say the City of Toledo did
- 24 absolutely nothing as far as investigation before they
- 25 severed that 24-inch water drainage pipe, correct, other

```
than have a conversation?
 1
 2
               We had a conversation and we looked and our
 3
     consultant who had designed the plans had never found it
 4
     when they did the design.
 5
               Are you blaming your consultant?
 6
               No, I am not. I am saying we run across --
     Α.
 7
     Q.
               You didn't sue them, did you?
 8
               THE COURT:
                           I'm saying -- and I hope, gentleman,
 9
     I am saying it for the last time, do not interrupt the
10
     witness in the middle of an answer, please.
11
               MR. ROBON:
                          I apologize.
12
               THE COURT:
                          Thank you. The witness may complete
13
     her answer.
14
               Thank you.
     Α.
15
               What I am saying is that the city runs across
16
     pipes like this all the time. I'm sorry.
17
               Have you ever cut a 24-inch pipe in the past?
18
               I'm sorry. We have cut pipes in the past, yes,
     Α.
19
     we run across old pipes all the time.
20
               Have you ever cut a 24-inch drainage pipe in the
     0.
21
    past?
22
    Α.
               Yes.
23
     Q.
               Next to a manhole?
24
     Α.
               I don't know if it's been next to a manhole.
```

Have you ever cut a pipe without a drainage

25

Q.

```
investigation or a drainage study?
 1
 2
               Yes.
                     Uh-huh.
                              Yes.
 3
               What did you think that that manhole was there
 4
     for?
 5
               We believed it was an old manhole. When we
 6
     actually had come across it.
 7
     Q.
               I want to know what you thought, not what we
 8
     thought?
 9
               Okay. I thought that it was --
     Α.
10
     Ο.
               You're the project engineer?
11
               MR. BAHRET: Your Honor --
12
     Α.
               I thought it was an old manhole.
13
               MR. BAHRET: Your Honor, he's doing it again.
14
               THE COURT: Let's take a break. Everybody take a
15
     breath.
              Let's allow the witness to complete her answer.
16
               When we came across it, it was all broken up.
                                                               Ιt
17
     wasn't even a manhole, as we call it these days.
18
     almost like a clay pipe, a large clay pipe, and so we
19
     believed it was old and not being used. The top was
20
                  It was filled with water and dirt.
     falling in.
21
               We had that meeting with the engineer, and the
22
     county and he felt that it didn't do anything if it would
23
     have drained something it would have drained the railroad
     stuff. So I'm sorry, we felt that we did our job.
24
25
     0.
               Wasn't the manhole on the edge of the railroad
```

```
1
     property?
 2
               Yes, it was.
 3
               And wasn't the manhole higher than the grade of
     Q.
 4
     the adjacent land?
 5
               Yes, it is.
 6
     Q.
               By five to 6 feet?
 7
               It was quite a bit higher, yes.
     Α.
 8
               And you agree with me that water doesn't run
     Q.
 9
     uphill?
10
     Α.
               Yes, I do.
11
               So where would the natural accumulation of water
     Ο.
12
     that is five or 6 feet below the manhole, where would it
13
     go?
14
               Well, that was part of the confusion.
     Α.
15
               So you didn't know where it went?
     Q.
16
               No, we did not.
     Α.
17
     Q.
               Isn't it true, Ms. Soncrant that you took a stab
18
     in the dark and made a mistake?
19
               We took a stab in the dark, yes.
     Α.
20
               Did you make a mistake?
     Q.
21
               There -- yes, I could have made a mistake.
     Α.
22
     Q.
               Has the city done anything in the two years since
23
     this has happened to correct that mistake, yes or no?
24
     Α.
               No.
25
               THE COURT: Is this a good spot to break for
```

```
1
     lunch?
 2
               MR. ROBON: Yes, Your Honor, it is.
 3
               THE COURT: Lunch has arrived, ladies and
 4
     gentlemen. We'll take our lunch break. How much time
 5
     would you folks like for lunch?
 6
               THE JURY: 45 minutes.
 7
               THE COURT: Which takes us to about 1:00. So I
 8
     show ten after. Why don't we promptly resume at 1:00 p.m.
 9
     We're in recess. And please remember the rules.
10
               Thank you.
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
```

1	CERTIFICATE		
2			
3	I certify that the foregoing is a correct transcript		
4	from the record of proceedings in the above-entitled matter.		
5			
6	s:/Angela D. Nixon		
7			
8	Angela D. Nixon, RPR, CRR Date		
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Case: 3:06-cv-02950-17 Do	(20,000) <b>10,000</b> 10,000 11/24/08 154 of	666611 BageID # 2940
\$ Case. 5.00-CV-02950-32 D0		
•	20-foot [3] 71/9 79/25 101/14	66-inch [4] 17/22 23/7 142/21 146/4
\$0 [1] 26/1	2000 [1] 118/21	6th [1] 96/23
\$1,930,085 [1] 91/3	2001 [5]   26/6 35/17 90/25 114/6 114/10	7
\$13 [1] 137/22	2002 [1] 26/6	<i>I</i>
\$13 million [1] 137/22	2003 [6] 61/2 108/4 108/21 113/11 114/17	7 feet [2] 24/25 147/15
\$2 [2] 7/1 26/16	114/22	70 [2] 19/9 26/24
\$2 million [2] 7/1 26/16	2004 [3] 61/9 99/11 118/21	7050 [1] 1/18
\$2.1 [2] 17/21 138/2	2005 [1] 144/8	7800 [1] 1/19
\$2.1 million [2] 17/21 138/2	2006 [20] 17/3 18/17 22/22 22/23 24/6	8
\$20,000 [1] 27/7	33/11 33/13 49/19 52/15 55/23 70/18 76/2	0
\$200,000 [1] 25/8	119/23 127/19 128/8 128/9 129/5 130/12	80 acres [1] 109/10
\$355,000 [1] 27/8	140/6 144/8	80 feet [1] 19/9
\$40,000 [1] 87/14	2007 [6] 33/11 33/13 54/9 55/19 96/23	820,000 [1] 91/20
\$400,000 [2] 58/8 58/9	97/9	83 [4] 90/24 91/2 91/10 118/11
\$50 [2] 18/10 137/4	2008 [1] 1/6	84 [2] 92/21 118/11
\$50 million [2] 18/10 137/4	22 [3] 26/10 83/6 91/11	861-7800 [1] 1/19
\$60,000 [1] 27/4	220 feet [1] 51/22	897-6500 [1] 1/16
\$630,000 [1] 58/9	24 [2] 110/10 110/16	8:30 a.m [1] 10/15
1	24-inch [5] 22/23 146/2 148/25 149/17	
	149/20	9
10.4 [4] 449/47		0.44 [5] 442/22 442/25 442/25 444/5 444/2
04 [1] 118/17	24-inch-in-diameter [1] 146/22	9-11 [5] 113/23 113/25 113/25 114/5 114/8
'05 [1] 76/1	25 [3] 3/6 67/2 117/16	90-acre [1] 109/9
'06 [2] 118/17 118/21	25-foot [1] 71/11	90s [1] 46/14
'08 [1] 92/25	260-5259 [1] 1/21	91 [1] 55/22
	29 [1] 114/17	92 [1] 95/21
1		
1 percent [2] 118/2 118/8	<del> </del> 3	A
		a m [4] 40/45
1,324,000 [1] 93/2	3-feet [1] 20/13	a.m [1] 10/15
1,930,000 [1] 91/18	3-foot [1] 29/19	abandoned [8] 17/15 28/24 29/4 29/21
10 [2] 82/22 103/15	30 [1] 53/22	32/5 32/15 32/24 71/15
10 feet [4] 18/24 32/20 79/2 135/12	30 feet [7] 105/13 105/17 105/21 105/22	able [6] 8/9 50/24 88/25 109/20 110/19
100 [3] 1/15 23/20 33/3	106/1 123/19 123/21	129/17
100-year [1] 33/14	300 feet [2] 41/7 51/9	about [77] 3/19 3/23 8/19 8/20 9/21 10/7
100-year [1] 55/14		
10:20 [1] 82/20	30295 [1] 48/14	17/24 18/10 18/18 18/21 19/6 19/14 19/23
10:35 [1] 82/22	30351 [1] 37/17	20/2 24/18 24/25 25/2 25/13 25/16 26/5
11 [8] 61/22 80/7 103/15 113/23 113/25	33 [1] 127/21	27/4 28/16 28/16 29/7 30/2 30/15 33/4
113/25 114/5 114/8	34 [1] 110/8	33/18 34/2 35/24 35/24 36/9 36/14 36/25
115 [1] 26/11	3:06CV2950 [1] 1/3	43/25 45/15 55/18 56/22 58/7 61/1 66/22
12 [6] 22/3 61/21 76/17 80/7 87/23 131/22		67/1 67/25 69/10 71/9 79/25 81/1 85/6
	4	93/12 93/19 98/15 99/22 100/24 102/7
12-feet [1] 25/2	4.50 - 4.51 20/40	
120 [1] 35/2	4 feet [1] 20/19	102/8 106/21 108/18 112/3 115/10 117/18
125,000 [1] 26/22	400 feet [1] 37/21	118/10 118/13 120/6 120/19 121/11 123/5
13 [6] 22/3 38/8 73/19 76/17 80/7 137/24	41 [2] 90/1 100/16	124/19 127/7 129/5 129/8 130/17 130/25
13 million [2] 137/9 137/11	419 [3] 1/16 1/19 1/21	130/25 137/25 145/8 145/11 152/7
14 [6] 22/3 26/10 38/24 39/21 76/16 80/7	43 [2] 54/13 54/22	above [1] 153/4
140 [1] 23/20	43528 [1] 1/18	above-entitled [1] 153/4
15 [18] 21/18 22/3 25/3 26/13 40/15 46/15	43537 [1] 1/15	absence [1] 92/7
73/18 75/12 76/9 76/16 78/11 80/1 80/8	43624 [1] 1/21	absolutely [8] 33/21 34/1 35/16 53/6
82/21 119/7 120/10 124/2 131/23	45 [2] 146/13 152/6	97/12 107/20 129/7 148/24
15 acres [1] 109/12		absorb [1] 58/13
15,000 [3] 86/10 87/23 87/23	5	abuts [1] 64/7
15-acre [1] 72/14	5 feet [2] 135/12 147/12	abutted [1] 38/21
15th [1] 92/25	5-feet [1] 20/9	abutting [3] 64/2 105/14 134/24
16 [15] 22/3 22/18 23/21 25/3 50/6 73/18	5-foot [1] 145/11	access [1] 142/20
77/6 80/8 89/12 116/13 116/17 119/7	50 [10] 5/22 26/23 102/11 117/3 117/10	accident [1] 16/8
120/13 124/4 134/4	117/17 117/17 117/22 117/25 119/10	accomplish [1] 72/2
17 [1] 52/5	50 million [2] 137/12 137/23	accomplished [1] 91/21
1701 [1] 1/15	50 percent [2] 26/21 69/2	accomplishment [1] 83/15
1701 [1] 1/13  1716 [1] 1/20		accordance [1] 10/23
175 [1] 18/18	117/22 117/25	according [2] 11/1 61/6
180 [1] 18/18	500-year [1] 33/13	accumulation [1] 151/11
19 [3] 89/15 100/19 101/4	52 [1] 117/13	accuracy [1] 13/22
1900s [1] 17/14	5259 [1] 1/21	accurate [2] 61/4 76/9
1964 [1] 19/18		accurately [2] 89/21 108/9
1967 [1] 38/8	6	acknowledge [2] 62/5 141/23
1999 [1] 67/17	6 acres [2] 109/6 109/13	acknowledged [3] 140/24 141/1 141/2
1:00 [2] 152/7 152/8	6 feet [2] 151/6 151/12	acknowledges [1] 120/17
2	6-acre [1] 101/25	acknowledging [1] 141/6
	6-feet [1] 145/8	acquired [1] 14/24
2,895,000 [1] 91/16	60 [1] 26/24	acre [3] 72/14 101/25 109/9
2-foot [1] 29/19	60 feet [1] 51/23	acreage [2] 107/15 108/24
120 131 1/6 52/14 71/11	1630 [2] 58/5 61/5	13C(PC 141 109/6 109/10 109/17 109/17
20 [3] 1/6 52/14 71/11	630 [2] 58/5 61/5 630 000 111 58/3	acres [4] 109/6 109/10 109/12 109/13
20 [3] 1/6 52/14 71/11 20 feet [1] 78/11	630 [2] 58/5 61/5 630,000 [1] 58/3	across [16] 6/23 19/14 22/23 23/13 23/21

Case: 3:06-cv-02950-JZ Dotatone 229 15/11-60/13-1/24/08 155 0 appropriate 957 3/17 9/22 82/4 82/14 94/2 along [12] 9/19 10/20 17/2 21/17 25/17 approval [5] 70/9 111/12 111/20 122/6 across... [11] 48/19 57/13 61/21 72/11 42/11 59/17 78/14 89/2 90/22 92/19 102/25 122/16 78/10 88/25 149/6 149/15 149/19 150/6 already [14] 8/14 9/21 28/6 32/25 86/5 approved [2] 106/9 111/17 150/16 93/16 93/17 99/11 104/2 107/6 107/15 April [5] 18/16 22/21 49/19 52/15 92/25 act [2] 20/10 106/9 120/16 125/8 140/3 April 15th [1] 92/25 actionable [3] 32/11 36/18 37/3 also [24] 2/7 2/14 3/4 4/3 5/12 10/3 14/14 April 5 [1] 52/15 actions [2] 25/20 143/21 24/19 25/10 25/15 29/5 37/20 50/15 55/19 arborist [1] 25/15 58/11 71/13 77/8 92/9 105/6 116/10 118/20 are [117] 2/1 2/25 3/1 4/9 4/18 5/6 5/12 active [9] 12/8 17/19 17/20 32/15 71/14 104/6 104/7 104/15 146/19 139/23 140/11 144/21 5/13 5/21 6/12 8/9 10/12 12/1 12/2 12/9 activity [1] 28/20 always [3] 6/6 119/15 119/18 12/24 14/3 14/18 15/7 15/9 15/18 16/3 am [10] 39/4 49/2 61/18 128/17 140/1 17/11 18/18 19/13 20/7 20/8 21/8 24/20 actual [2] 24/16 114/4 actuality [1] 23/4 141/4 149/6 149/6 149/9 149/15 25/8 26/7 26/14 27/4 31/11 33/23 34/15 actually [19] 22/22 23/11 32/13 42/18 amount [2] 60/8 93/1 35/3 35/12 35/17 36/1 36/5 36/14 38/2 Angela [3] 1/20 153/6 153/8 41/19 50/1 56/7 56/15 56/20 58/12 59/5 42/22 50/10 50/12 91/6 114/5 133/2 136/2 angle [1] 40/3 138/8 142/9 142/19 143/5 144/3 144/18 61/7 61/12 61/15 61/16 61/16 62/1 62/4 147/3 150/6 another [12] 8/17 17/8 17/12 71/14 71/16 65/12 67/5 67/13 69/16 72/1 84/6 86/5 added [1] 138/11 94/18 94/19 94/21 102/2 109/10 109/25 89/12 91/6 91/25 93/3 98/1 98/2 101/10 addition [2] 21/3 43/9 113/16 102/11 102/12 102/24 102/25 103/2 103/8 additional [1] 47/7 address [1] 143/18 answer [53] 12/20 12/21 12/22 12/24 103/14 103/23 104/4 104/23 105/9 105/12 12/25 13/3 43/6 43/18 52/2 57/15 59/4 60/2 105/16 106/8 106/14 106/16 107/11 110/16 addressed [1] 8/18 63/14 74/20 75/24 78/23 83/12 84/24 85/19 110/24 111/8 112/23 114/3 114/5 114/11 adequately [2] 54/4 55/13 85/20 87/13 97/12 98/9 103/19 107/2 114/15 114/17 117/16 117/17 117/22 120/4 adjacent [6] 3/22 79/18 89/18 139/13 108/10 108/12 108/14 110/23 112/14 120/9 120/12 120/20 120/20 121/2 124/8 146/19 151/4 112/25 117/12 117/21 118/3 123/1 124/17 128/21 136/6 136/10 139/24 139/25 143/9 adjoining [2] 21/1 104/3 125/22 129/18 129/21 130/4 130/13 130/13 145/8 145/10 146/13 149/5 adjust [1] 54/14 130/21 130/22 130/24 132/1 132/19 133/11 area [23] 4/8 24/3 35/7 37/24 41/2 41/3 administration [1] 135/4 137/20 145/2 149/10 149/13 150/15 52/17 53/14 75/1 80/7 80/9 82/4 88/23 89/1 89/4 99/23 107/9 120/2 132/11 132/17 admission [1] 12/15 answered [3] 107/6 117/23 140/3 admit [1] 29/17 answering [1] 138/12 139/2 143/18 145/5 admitted [1] 11/2 answers [2] 13/10 92/14 areas [1] 44/9 Anthony [2] 28/15 67/3 aren't [4] 97/6 98/20 107/12 107/13 advanced [2] 3/25 93/8 aerial [3] 16/23 29/2 70/17 any [77] 3/12 3/23 7/16 8/10 9/3 11/18 arguing [1] 144/24 affected [3] 45/7 57/23 59/21 arguments [2] 2/24 11/11 11/21 11/24 12/14 12/25 13/23 14/3 14/5 affirmatively [1] 135/12 around [5] 28/22 32/9 58/3 93/16 123/10 14/6 14/7 14/13 14/14 15/3 15/3 15/8 19/5 after [33] 9/9 11/12 14/18 22/5 22/11 19/7 20/15 22/9 22/9 23/25 24/1 26/18 28/7 arrive [2] 127/8 127/12 26/25 27/13 35/1 35/14 36/2 42/8 45/1 45/1 28/18 33/21 36/9 36/22 37/4 44/9 45/13 arrived [1] 152/3 artist [1] 22/13 as [107] 2/12 2/17 3/20 4/13 4/17 4/24 45/17 46/9 46/12 47/14 47/14 47/16 56/6 45/14 46/8 46/18 47/7 47/8 47/19 54/23 57/25 68/9 68/15 76/1 113/25 114/8 122/15 58/19 60/10 62/21 62/24 65/2 82/14 92/1 93/8 97/4 105/4 105/6 105/8 107/20 110/19 7/12 7/12 8/9 8/9 8/10 10/25 11/4 11/6 12/2 136/14 144/12 144/12 144/14 145/1 152/8 afternoon [3] 2/4 3/5 127/10 112/6 112/15 112/16 112/23 118/17 118/18 12/6 12/12 12/17 12/21 13/2 13/8 13/9 again [10] 10/8 32/11 33/7 35/19 56/1 87/1 118/20 119/6 121/7 123/24 128/22 130/9 13/12 14/2 14/16 15/2 15/3 15/9 15/11 88/14 89/5 136/9 150/13 130/10 130/16 130/17 133/15 142/4 143/16 16/11 16/11 16/17 19/24 20/10 23/3 25/5 against [2] 3/12 55/23 29/19 30/10 31/21 32/17 32/18 37/10 37/11 145/15 145/24 agasp [1] 22/8 Agner [1] 145/23 anybody [8] 28/10 34/20 61/7 63/3 64/23 37/11 38/7 38/23 40/14 43/7 47/12 47/13 48/6 48/7 48/7 48/15 49/15 54/12 56/18 115/19 121/2 139/17 ago [12] 6/24 39/7 61/1 63/10 68/14 98/12 anymore [1] 46/11 56/23 58/18 62/1 62/17 62/24 65/6 65/6 98/13 98/17 102/10 102/11 103/13 147/4 anyone [2] 5/9 147/5 65/10 66/16 66/17 66/17 68/9 68/9 75/7 anything [32] 2/20 3/16 4/1 5/4 10/11 agree [23] 12/14 31/7 45/6 45/9 45/13 80/5 81/16 81/22 81/23 81/25 82/1 82/9 62/14 81/21 104/1 104/9 104/17 104/19 86/12 89/25 90/23 92/10 92/21 95/7 97/5 18/21 29/11 29/22 35/24 36/12 37/3 45/10 106/8 114/21 114/23 115/8 115/12 115/16 45/14 45/15 47/8 47/10 58/24 58/25 67/11 97/6 98/20 110/17 116/12 119/10 119/10 116/10 125/23 131/2 139/9 142/18 151/8 95/14 114/22 120/19 123/9 125/5 125/19 120/18 123/2 123/13 130/3 130/4 130/4 agreement [4] 12/14 114/13 114/14 118/1 130/11 133/25 141/7 142/8 143/7 150/22 131/18 136/15 137/6 144/19 144/23 145/13 ahead [4] 9/18 9/25 58/1 109/3 146/13 148/24 148/24 150/17 151/22 albatross [1] 107/1 anyway [1] 124/24 ascertainable [1] 4/19 alive [2] 47/13 119/10 anywhere [1] 118/25 aside [2] 6/11 109/19 all [84] 3/3 6/10 6/14 7/11 8/16 11/5 11/14 ask [22] 5/12 8/2 10/19 10/20 40/15 50/6 apologize [3] 56/17 94/17 149/11 apparently [1] 34/21 12/1 12/3 13/9 13/24 14/5 15/11 17/6 18/6 57/4 57/4 57/14 60/14 64/6 87/1 88/13 97/8 21/5 23/10 24/3 24/8 24/15 26/17 27/5 27/6 appearance [1] 13/18 98/2 108/11 108/12 115/10 132/4 136/9 APPEARANCES [1] 1/13 27/14 28/8 28/16 29/16 30/20 30/24 31/8 137/16 137/18 32/9 32/12 35/10 36/25 38/1 46/8 50/1 appease [1] 64/9 asked [20] 8/25 9/1 9/14 12/19 30/2 30/6 36/21 43/6 46/24 50/22 97/8 98/22 98/22 53/18 57/22 58/25 61/25 61/25 65/21 67/3 applicable [1] 3/1 applies [1] 36/11 70/13 76/23 84/7 85/15 89/6 92/14 95/11 103/12 104/14 104/17 117/16 120/16 123/4 97/16 97/20 99/2 100/3 102/4 102/21 103/1 apply [2] 13/16 13/17 124/9 103/7 103/11 103/14 104/20 105/5 106/15 Applying [1] 14/1 asking [7] 60/10 82/1 83/3 87/5 96/14 107/11 108/17 109/14 110/6 111/5 112/19 appraisal [4] 25/14 58/2 61/8 61/10 114/4 119/12 113/10 114/17 115/8 116/21 123/4 123/21 appraisals [1] 61/16 aspect [1] 58/8 assign [2] 14/1 140/12 124/3 125/23 128/2 130/3 146/9 149/16 appraised [1] 61/5 149/19 150/16 appraiser [7] 25/14 25/14 26/19 27/2 27/3 assistant [1] 145/23 alleviate [3] 81/5 81/17 130/11 27/5 27/8 Associates [7] 1/17 25/12 69/25 90/8 allow [8] 35/21 97/5 108/11 108/13 129/20 105/3 131/10 136/17 appraises [1] 61/8 appraising [1] 36/15 association [3] 72/7 72/8 72/9 130/3 130/21 150/15 allowed [2] 6/7 27/17 approach [6] 3/7 30/11 31/14 51/13 64/19 assume [2] 61/24 86/15 almost [4] 8/15 43/21 98/12 150/18 126/21 assuming [3] 5/17 30/5 119/1

Case: 3:06-cv-02950-JZ Dot 123/439 Filed: 11/24/08 156 otologias [1] 28/42 behalf [1] 7/23 ballast [1] 76/4 assumption [2] 30/3 104/23 bank [16] 19/16 19/17 26/14 26/15 31/22 behind [23] 17/19 20/14 21/20 23/10 61/6 92/22 111/15 111/21 111/21 118/10 24/14 29/1 30/21 32/18 34/23 39/15 40/9 at [104] 5/15 6/20 6/22 7/24 8/15 8/16 10/1 10/15 11/5 11/21 12/5 15/6 18/7 18/18 118/11 122/7 122/7 122/15 122/22 44/9 47/8 48/20 51/4 52/20 56/8 62/6 73/18 95/10 115/20 134/9 139/14 18/18 20/9 21/19 23/19 24/21 25/1 26/21 banker [1] 111/15 being [13] 12/17 22/22 26/18 59/1 62/1 bar [4] 31/16 51/16 84/22 126/24 29/16 30/4 30/5 30/8 33/6 36/2 37/17 38/4 38/20 38/25 39/4 39/24 40/3 41/3 46/3 bare [1] 24/25 75/11 93/15 112/13 130/4 130/5 130/25 46/15 46/24 48/1 51/11 52/5 52/13 53/16 barely [1] 79/12 147/13 150/19 54/1 55/8 55/10 55/10 55/14 55/15 56/18 Barkan [1] 1/14 belief [2] 15/11 77/24 57/11 58/5 58/25 59/7 61/5 61/10 62/19 barrier [11] 25/17 26/20 29/19 60/6 60/9 believability [1] 15/15 believe [34] 2/24 3/2 10/3 13/15 14/3 14/5 64/8 67/23 67/23 73/7 76/19 77/5 78/7 78/7 62/17 104/4 104/6 104/8 106/3 106/17 78/9 78/11 82/22 83/3 84/7 84/8 89/14 91/9 base [2] 20/9 90/4 15/19 26/1 26/2 28/8 28/17 33/14 35/20 93/1 93/14 93/17 96/6 99/2 100/9 100/10 based [6] 16/2 58/4 65/22 90/19 122/11 37/1 58/7 65/19 74/1 82/3 82/13 84/17 94/6 102/24 104/12 107/23 112/3 113/11 115/17 124/16 95/7 95/8 95/15 128/12 129/10 130/25 116/21 116/22 118/24 119/2 120/11 127/9 basement [5] 58/1 75/16 75/18 75/20 131/3 131/4 131/5 136/23 144/5 145/3 128/1 129/3 131/15 133/5 133/19 140/5 75/22 147/3 142/5 142/13 146/25 148/7 148/10 152/8 basically [1] 108/24 believed [5] 14/12 36/22 147/6 150/5 attempted [1] 23/18 basins [3] 73/7 124/10 124/19 150/19 attempting [1] 83/11 attention [6] 12/16 16/1 46/9 129/9 130/12 basis [9] 14/8 50/21 70/12 76/11 81/19 Belmont [3] 19/14 19/15 19/18 belong [1] 19/14 below [1] 151/12 87/25 91/11 140/6 146/7 Bates [21] 4/6 17/4 23/12 30/9 30/11 130/18 attorney [1] 103/17 37/17 37/18 37/25 39/3 39/12 41/7 41/11 bench [1] 31/14 attorneys [1] 16/18 41/12 41/19 44/7 44/9 64/20 75/11 93/14 best [1] 31/21 attribute [1] 92/2 93/14 144/3 better [3] 14/25 29/8 53/9 audible [1] 58/12 August [2] 96/23 97/9 Betterman [1] 113/5 between [21] 14/15 15/4 17/13 21/7 23/1 be [117] 2/11 2/12 2/16 3/8 3/20 4/7 4/21 5/1 5/2 5/22 6/18 7/2 7/16 7/18 8/1 8/2 8/9 9/22 10/14 11/2 11/8 11/17 11/23 12/15 August 6th [1] 96/23 25/3 26/22 28/23 32/14 56/1 71/15 71/17 aunt [1] 43/22 12/16 13/1 13/5 13/9 14/10 15/20 15/24 86/10 89/5 89/12 104/6 104/15 104/24 aunt's [2] 45/1 45/2 15/24 15/25 16/13 18/25 19/7 19/22 20/1 118/17 118/21 144/3 20/2 21/10 21/12 21/25 22/9 23/1 23/11 authentication [1] 55/4 bias [1] 13/23 bid [1] 70/10 big [4] 22/7 32/8 52/8 72/17 authority [2] 82/14 143/20 26/3 26/4 27/18 27/19 27/22 29/5 33/2 authorization [1] 136/11 35/20 36/11 36/17 36/18 37/1 39/14 43/6 45/20 50/24 52/17 53/10 55/14 55/15 56/21 bigger [1] 21/15 authorized [2] 136/7 136/7 availability [1] 112/10 Bill [3] 115/2 115/3 115/4 59/17 60/9 60/14 62/17 65/16 65/21 66/24 Avenue [1] 1/20 68/4 73/12 80/6 81/5 81/9 81/17 81/24 82/6 Birch [3] 111/8 118/17 123/6 83/12 84/17 85/3 85/3 85/7 85/15 85/23 average [1] 14/25 Birchhollow [1] 110/16 avoid [1] 3/12 award [1] 26/2 86/7 86/23 87/12 87/20 88/11 88/22 88/24 Birchwood [1] 110/1 bit [6] 17/8 28/22 41/13 48/4 59/11 151/7 88/25 89/6 89/9 90/8 91/11 91/13 101/17 bite [1] 27/12 102/9 105/20 112/20 113/3 115/9 116/11 awarded [1] 70/11 aware [37] 14/18 42/2 61/7 61/12 61/14 118/8 121/12 125/18 127/10 129/10 129/1 Blade [2] 139/22 139/25 61/15 61/18 62/4 82/15 102/12 102/14 135/5 135/9 135/19 blades [1] 52/8 102/15 102/16 105/9 105/12 105/15 105/16 beautiful [3] 49/10 49/12 49/21 blaming [1] 149/5 105/24 114/3 114/5 114/11 114/15 114/16 beauty [1] 60/7 block [3] 24/8 62/9 62/9 became [4] 68/12 128/19 140/15 146/1 blocks [1] 20/14 114/17 114/20 120/4 120/8 120/9 120/12 because [34] 5/7 5/24 6/8 14/4 23/5 24/1 blow [3] 30/10 64/19 64/21 26/17 28/22 30/19 32/12 32/14 34/14 36/16 blue [1] 22/15 because [34] 5/7 5/24 6/8 14/4 23/5 24/1 120/15 120/20 121/2 121/5 128/19 128/23 139/24 146/1 away [14] 18/24 21/1 21/5 26/5 33/25 47/3 36/20 37/3 58/3 58/10 61/15 86/5 87/17 board [1] 50/5 73/20 73/21 79/19 134/16 135/12 135/13 88/4 105/1 105/2 108/2 110/11 114/4 118/6 Bob [4] 28/1 44/22 60/23 136/23 121/17 126/7 130/24 137/24 142/25 144/15 booklet [1] 13/7 135/15 147/12 boom [2] 61/11 61/13 border [1] 36/3 awkward [1] 47/24 146/25 axe [1] 52/7 become [1] 128/22 bore [2] 25/3 86/4 been [56] 3/9 4/14 5/3 6/6 7/24 12/22 13/6 R 15/5 17/15 19/10 28/6 29/19 31/12 31/20 boring [2] 86/7 89/6 Babcock [1] 136/23 38/23 40/20 47/13 49/18 57/22 58/10 60/7 both [11] 5/21 6/25 9/10 11/4 14/24 17/19 64/9 65/22 66/5 74/13 74/13 80/16 83/25 28/12 72/5 95/11 108/7 120/10 back [74] 2/2 4/10 17/14 18/20 23/21 24/12 24/22 25/17 26/1 26/2 27/1 28/14 90/23 91/21 92/1 93/16 98/18 107/23 bottom [6] 78/7 78/9 93/1 148/2 148/9 32/17 32/18 36/2 38/19 39/5 39/13 39/24 107/25 108/5 109/20 110/19 112/11 112/12 148/22 40/1 40/25 43/2 46/9 46/14 47/12 47/25 114/12 118/5 119/10 119/11 119/15 119/18 bought [16] 33/21 99/12 108/24 109/1 51/8 54/23 55/2 55/11 58/5 60/3 60/4 61/5 109/4 109/6 109/10 109/11 113/14 113/15 123/11 123/12 128/12 131/12 132/7 143/5 64/11 71/12 73/7 73/11 76/16 76/22 77/25 144/7 144/12 146/16 149/24 113/15 114/3 114/6 114/8 114/13 119/24 78/10 79/2 80/5 80/7 84/14 85/2 89/16 before [51] 1/10 3/25 13/7 28/9 29/9 29/22 bound [1] 15/8 90/12 90/25 92/18 93/16 97/9 102/25 104/2 30/7 31/22 33/1 33/5 33/20 34/7 41/1 46/15 boundary [2] 15/4 133/19 105/5 107/17 108/20 109/12 110/10 119/7 49/8 49/18 49/19 49/19 52/15 54/23 55/6 box [1] 48/1 119/11 119/15 119/18 119/22 119/23 120/2 58/16 63/12 63/12 64/11 66/8 68/20 70/18 Boy [1] 82/11 124/10 125/19 129/6 133/2 133/8 136/24 83/11 95/7 96/12 96/17 98/24 108/13 boycotting [1] 139/25 143/8 115/14 115/17 115/20 116/1 116/15 116/10 bramble [2] 95/12 100/12 background [3] 40/24 68/7 80/12 119/7 120/6 120/14 120/22 121/3 133/25 brambles [19] 19/11 19/13 19/19 20/7 backs [1] 24/2 134/11 134/12 144/2 145/23 148/24 20/9 21/6 21/7 21/10 22/3 22/11 24/15 78/1 backyard [5] 33/22 40/22 63/18 63/24 beforehand [1] 56/13 89/15 89/17 100/4 101/4 101/10 101/15 120/13 beg [1] 125/11 132/9 backyards [1] 116/17 began [1] 134/11 branch [1] 78/8 bad [1] 65/6 begin [1] 108/14 break [7] 82/19 83/11 127/7 127/8 150/14 Bahret [6] 1/17 1/17 44/22 60/23 65/7 beginning [1] 56/18 151/25 152/4

Case: 3:06-cv-02950-JZ DO(c#me2189) 20/11/292/6 \$8/54456/14 144/22 0 148/23 (49/05) 51/22 2943 144/23 147/21 150/16 city's [7] 20/17 27/2 27/3 27/10 31/6 breakdown [1] 91/5 camera [2] 147/20 147/22 130/12 130/18 can [72] 4/12 4/21 5/2 6/21 7/11 7/25 8/8 breaks [1] 138/10 civil [2] 3/13 16/6 breath [5] 50/20 59/25 81/13 137/19 9/11 16/9 16/16 20/10 23/19 25/15 27/18 claim [5] 2/18 2/25 3/1 29/12 29/13 29/15 30/11 31/14 31/21 33/9 34/22 39/7 150/15 claiming [2] 33/8 64/10 claims [2] 36/12 119/19 briars [1] 71/10 41/9 43/2 50/6 50/25 52/4 52/21 53/8 53/25 Bridgewater [1] 113/9 57/21 58/13 60/6 62/7 64/16 64/22 67/15 class [1] 142/5 clay [3] 121/22 150/18 150/18 brief [4] 2/5 8/19 48/2 82/25 67/18 70/15 70/25 72/1 74/10 74/20 75/12 bring [4] 7/5 7/11 16/1 18/11 75/17 78/6 79/5 80/5 81/24 83/4 83/10 clear [15] 20/24 90/18 90/18 94/24 94/25 bringing [2] 32/6 144/17 84/19 84/24 86/9 87/24 88/15 92/11 93/1 95/1 95/14 99/23 102/8 105/13 105/17 93/5 93/21 94/5 94/21 101/12 115/12 106/1 123/19 123/21 123/24 broken [1] 150/16 broker [1] 112/24 117/13 120/24 126/2 126/21 127/13 128/18 clear-cut [6] 94/24 94/25 95/1 95/14 99/23 brought [11] 2/2 10/15 12/15 23/20 35/3 130/12 132/1 132/19 38/4 123/17 129/8 130/11 130/18 146/10 can't [17] 7/5 29/14 33/19 34/4 36/24 cleared [11] 32/10 35/1 45/24 45/25 46/5 41/22 43/25 53/11 57/2 61/23 62/7 62/8 brush [17] 19/11 20/20 21/5 22/2 39/18 46/6 124/21 125/19 144/12 144/13 144/14 clearing [11] 17/4 20/18 31/9 51/20 84/15 53/7 53/14 53/18 71/10 71/16 76/3 78/1 68/13 119/13 122/25 125/22 128/15 79/8 79/22 89/17 95/12 116/18 canceled [1] 114/18 89/16 118/22 129/2 130/25 134/23 145/1 buffer [5] 20/11 71/17 71/18 71/24 95/12 clearly [4] 18/19 58/13 60/8 76/12 cannot [1] 65/17 build [7] 23/21 25/6 48/24 59/1 60/25 67/6 capital [1] 93/7 clients [1] 3/11 close [7] 5/15 16/13 25/8 30/9 71/8 78/17 121/16 car [1] 134/9 care [1] 119/4 147/16 builder [2] 110/11 110/12 builders [3] 113/2 113/3 114/18 careful [1] 135/5 closer [1] 17/8 building [4] 67/6 75/13 87/6 110/14 Carol [1] 10/13 closing [3] 11/10 114/12 114/16 Club [3] 19/14 19/15 19/18 built [10] 57/25 63/1 63/17 63/23 75/12 cars [1] 29/8 carved [1] 109/16 case [30] 2/25 3/1 3/2 3/10 5/10 6/7 6/25 clue [2] 98/7 119/16 84/2 90/25 115/2 115/5 121/13 cluttered [1] 48/4 bulk [1] 7/23 bulkhead [1] 23/6 7/24 9/12 10/9 11/19 12/10 12/11 13/14 coal [1] 30/14 cognizant [1] 140/15 bulldozer [1] 35/5 16/6 16/8 17/25 21/12 25/20 26/5 28/4 bunch [1] 49/20 36/10 36/25 56/20 59/20 59/24 82/12 collect [1] 147/25 buncher [2] 50/8 50/9 102/13 120/5 143/16 college [1] 142/6 cases [2] 2/19 2/21 catch [3] 73/7 124/10 124/19 Columbus [3] 67/5 123/10 123/12 bus [1] 17/5 business [6] 28/15 67/19 82/7 82/9 82/10 combined [2] 109/14 128/2 come [25] 4/5 19/9 26/1 26/2 26/19 26/23 catching [1] 54/18 123/14 caused [3] 92/7 131/5 142/20 but [73] 3/20 6/15 8/14 8/18 9/9 9/10 10/17 27/2 27/14 34/22 41/9 51/11 53/8 65/11 12/1 15/14 15/18 16/14 17/19 18/10 18/25 caution [1] 3/11 70/15 85/24 88/13 117/6 128/16 141/9 cautionary [1] 108/7 144/14 144/17 144/19 144/21 145/1 150/6 19/5 20/7 20/23 21/2 21/11 22/2 23/3 27/22 28/8 28/11 28/17 29/10 29/23 30/21 31/3 centers [1] 67/6 comes [2] 74/24 136/2 32/6 32/13 32/22 33/1 34/12 34/14 34/24 certain [1] 13/4 coming [10] 4/13 19/22 47/3 47/5 74/1 74/7 74/16 74/23 93/9 127/10 36/19 42/24 49/14 49/25 54/17 56/1 57/1 certainly [5] 10/1 14/18 37/2 49/25 81/25 certified [3] 37/11 48/7 66/17 57/10 58/3 60/8 60/11 61/3 61/16 61/23 commenced [1] 145/23 64/8 64/21 72/6 76/8 79/12 82/1 85/8 85/15 certify [1] 153/3 comment [3] 31/19 31/21 65/17 chain [4] 20/25 78/14 79/17 79/20 92/1 92/17 93/23 100/13 107/19 109/19 commented [1] 65/11 114/12 115/4 115/6 116/12 116/19 116/22 chain-link [3] 78/14 79/17 79/20 comments [5] 3/14 56/15 56/20 65/10 chair [1] 82/24 123/1 130/2 147/14 65/12 button [1] 74/23 buy [2] 24/21 113/16 chairs [1] 10/18 commercial [1] 87/9 chance [1] 129/20 commissioner [3] 128/5 128/9 135/2 change [1] 70/7 commissioners [1] 128/14 buying [1] 99/20 changed [1] 68/23 commitment [3] 111/22 111/22 113/21 charge [4] 18/7 30/1 135/21 139/6 commitments [2] 110/6 110/10 call [13] 3/18 10/5 12/14 16/18 29/19 36/3 check [1] 136/16 checks [1] 136/25 committed [1] 111/15 37/8 52/7 66/15 126/20 127/1 145/25 commonly [1] 14/17 child [3] 33/2 40/18 42/15 150/17 communities [3] 138/7 138/16 139/23 called [13] 21/15 32/23 35/25 37/10 48/6 choose [1] 15/1 community [2] 72/10 83/7 62/17 66/16 68/17 68/20 106/24 109/25 chop [1] 21/5 company [8] 5/23 6/5 27/17 27/19 67/5 chosen [1] 59/1 68/17 92/23 136/16 128/25 146/5 comparison [1] 77/20 compensate [1] 26/3 Cambridge [109] 4/9 4/11 17/1 17/9 19/12 Christy [1] 127/1 20/20 21/8 21/25 22/2 23/10 28/19 28/20 circumstances [1] 13/24 29/2 29/7 29/11 30/21 32/13 33/15 34/7 compile [1] 90/24 citations [1] 3/1 34/11 35/5 37/21 38/19 38/21 39/13 39/25 city [99] 1/7 3/24 4/2 4/5 17/21 17/21 18/1 complain [3] 29/7 36/14 36/23 45/14 46/4 47/12 48/13 49/8 49/10 50/16 18/2 18/4 18/8 18/15 18/22 19/8 22/15 complaints [4] 136/14 144/15 144/20 50/23 51/5 52/20 56/2 56/8 57/19 58/19 22/25 23/2 25/20 27/5 28/4 28/12 28/17 144/23 59/7 59/16 60/13 62/2 62/11 62/19 62/24 28/20 34/19 35/14 36/6 37/4 44/22 49/8 complete [3] 108/13 149/12 150/15 67/24 69/10 69/21 70/17 72/18 73/5 73/6 60/23 73/16 76/23 78/18 83/17 83/18 89/17 completed [5] 2/4 26/6 34/2 76/1 80/15 89/23 90/13 90/18 93/9 94/7 98/25 111/20 73/17 75/10 78/4 83/5 83/6 84/16 86/23 completely [1] 12/24 completes [1] 3/2 87/3 87/11 93/16 96/2 98/18 99/11 99/23 111/20 112/5 115/14 115/17 115/20 116/1 complied [3] 105/19 106/1 106/5 100/8 101/1 101/3 101/6 101/7 101/21 116/15 116/16 119/7 120/7 120/14 120/22 101/24 102/8 102/13 102/22 104/6 104/25 comport [1] 2/10 121/4 122/2 122/3 127/23 128/14 129/7 compound [1] 22/5 104/25 105/9 105/13 105/14 105/19 105/21 129/12 129/13 130/9 131/21 132/8 132/18 105/25 106/5 106/22 112/13 112/18 112/21 132/20 133/15 134/18 135/4 135/16 136/1 compounds [1] 23/16 concern [2] 8/4 31/23 112/23 113/3 118/20 128/11 128/19 130/17 136/5 136/8 136/12 136/16 136/24 137/3 132/10 133/3 133/14 133/19 134/10 135/5 137/6 138/6 138/10 138/15 138/20 139/3 concerned [1] 80/16 140/16 144/4 144/11 145/6 146/6 139/6 139/9 139/12 139/15 139/20 139/22 concerning [1] 13/21 Cambridge's [1] 145/4 140/12 141/6 142/18 145/14 146/11 146/23 concerns [2] 14/22 19/6

Case: 3:06-cv-02950-JZ Doc #44/8344/97147/96 147/26448/9 148/92 0 50/23 76/23 78/19 78/26 79/8 93/16 94/24 148/13 148/15 148/16 148/18 148/19 94/25 95/1 95/2 95/2 95/14 95/25 99/23 concludes [2] 11/10 15/16 148/21 148/22 148/25 151/23 153/3 102/8 103/2 103/9 104/2 120/7 131/4 conclusion [4] 11/5 11/21 12/5 27/15 correction [1] 82/2 132/13 135/6 135/10 135/19 135/25 136/7 conclusively [1] 12/17 correctly [1] 125/22 136/11 139/13 146/21 149/17 149/18 cost [13] 25/7 25/16 80/2 86/6 86/22 87/3 concrete [3] 77/2 90/5 116/23 149/20 149/25 87/5 87/6 87/11 87/20 87/25 90/24 91/17 conditions [1] 121/17 cuts [1] 36/23 condos [1] 20/12 costs [1] 89/4 cutting [20] 21/3 21/13 21/24 22/21 27/6 conference [4] 31/16 51/16 84/22 126/24 could [41] 5/23 17/21 18/23 24/16 29/24 50/2 50/15 51/4 52/10 52/15 54/24 55/6 confirm [1] 2/7 29/24 30/6 32/17 51/13 54/14 57/15 64/13 55/24 70/18 92/3 93/9 93/22 105/4 132/8 confirmed [1] 10/4 64/15 64/17 70/15 76/5 84/16 87/19 88/6 confirming [1] 2/14 88/6 93/19 101/17 115/16 116/13 116/19 D conflict [1] 15/9 116/20 116/20 116/25 118/5 121/12 121/13 confused [1] 112/2 121/15 121/15 122/3 129/25 138/16 143/2 daily [4] 13/17 70/12 140/6 146/7 confusion [1] 151/14 146/21 147/2 148/8 151/21 damage [4] 49/18 57/22 58/10 65/22 connected [2] 46/21 46/21 couldn't [8] 33/20 64/10 76/4 79/20 79/21 damaged [1] 15/5 connecting [1] 4/24 88/2 121/14 122/20 dark [2] 151/18 151/19 counsel [29] 2/2 2/11 2/18 2/18 2/20 2/24 date [9] 4/15 96/24 108/2 114/16 115/4 connection [2] 11/15 143/23 connector [1] 5/2 3/5 3/7 3/11 3/13 3/16 5/4 5/5 5/13 8/23 9/1 117/7 117/8 117/11 153/8 consider [8] 12/1 12/2 12/12 12/25 14/21 9/4 9/10 9/14 9/20 15/17 19/25 31/19 32/25 dated [1] 92/25 15/8 15/14 32/6 35/21 56/20 84/21 97/14 127/6 day [8] 10/1 16/22 58/8 59/5 59/6 98/16 counsel's [4] 20/3 35/19 100/19 137/17 98/17 143/1 considered [2] 13/2 13/9 considering [1] 14/20 counties [1] 83/18 day's [1] 22/6 consistently [1] 66/7 counting [1] 15/13 days [2] 35/1 150/17 constituted [1] 25/21 Country [5] 19/14 19/15 19/18 68/22 de [6] 48/17 55/7 55/11 55/14 55/15 103/8 dead [4] 34/6 34/7 107/20 111/6 dealt [1] 89/9 constructed [2] 26/8 80/1 construction [14] 18/14 23/18 52/14 county [37] 16/23 17/23 18/2 18/3 18/3 65/22 69/24 91/17 113/8 123/15 134/11 18/6 18/12 23/2 25/5 28/16 105/10 105/20 death [2] 45/2 45/2 134/12 135/23 135/25 140/6 146/6 106/6 121/18 123/18 124/9 124/13 125/10 debt [1] 119/2 consultant [3] 136/15 149/3 149/5 125/14 126/16 126/16 138/7 138/17 138/2<sup>-</sup> December [3] 24/6 114/17 114/22 consulted [2] 33/4 120/5 138/23 138/24 139/1 139/4 139/5 139/8 December 29 [1] 114/17 contact [2] 145/14 145/22 139/8 139/21 145/15 145/22 146/8 146/14 decide [6] 11/14 12/10 13/13 13/15 14/7 contacted [1] 70/6 150/22 43/19 decision [4] 11/17 25/25 68/16 71/24 container [1] 22/18 couple [7] 26/24 35/1 35/11 41/6 63/10 contend [1] 29/10 94/2 137/5 deem [1] 14/2 contends [1] 62/11 course [5] 3/12 12/8 13/4 82/9 97/2 deep [4] 24/24 25/2 145/10 148/20 content [1] 15/13 court [23] 1/1 1/20 2/2 2/19 4/15 5/3 5/8 deeper [2] 89/3 89/3 8/5 8/18 9/13 9/15 9/23 10/3 10/9 12/23 context [1] 117/18 Deere [1] 50/12 continue [5] 8/1 31/24 35/21 130/6 138/16 contract [3] 21/4 134/16 134/20 13/10 16/2 16/11 17/25 18/25 27/24 83/14 default [2] 26/15 122/7 108/9 defendant [8] 1/8 1/17 9/2 9/5 10/7 11/9 15/6 127/4 contracting [2] 67/5 68/15 Court's [1] 9/21 contractor [20] 6/9 18/15 20/16 20/17 courtroom [4] 2/3 5/11 48/4 97/15 defendant's [2] 2/9 10/9 31/7 31/10 31/11 32/2 45/10 67/4 68/12 cover [2] 46/22 145/11 defense [6] 2/11 2/18 2/24 5/4 31/19 80/6 81/16 134/14 135/12 135/14 136/3 covered [6] 21/11 35/10 76/3 79/22 132/13 Defiance [1] 26/15 136/6 136/10 146/8 116/17 116/18 contractors [5] 37/4 70/11 78/18 130/10 degree [1] 83/14 covering [1] 24/10 delay [1] 2/22 Crandalĭ [1] 135/3 133/16 contracts [1] 114/18 create [1] 60/12 deliberate [1] 11/12 credibility [3] 13/13 15/15 31/5 conversation [2] 149/1 149/2 delinquent [1] 26/16 convince [1] 71/18 creeks [2] 84/7 84/9 denying [4] 132/18 132/20 136/6 136/10 cross [9] 44/16 44/18 60/17 60/19 96/8 department [2] 7/9 127/25 coordinator [1] 135/3 copy [1] 97/18 96/10 127/2 127/15 130/1 depict [2] 55/13 75/2 corner [19] 21/19 21/20 40/1 40/2 40/25 cross-examination [2] 127/2 130/1 depicted [2] 65/6 146/11 77/2 77/6 77/6 77/9 90/5 90/12 100/9 depiction [2] 54/22 57/10 cross-examine [2] 60/17 96/8 100/10 100/13 100/15 101/9 101/12 101/14 crossed [1] 42/2 depicts [4] 54/4 70/17 76/8 89/21 101/18 crosses [1] 88/20 deposit [1] 114/19 corporate [3] 8/14 118/1 118/6 crossing [2] 93/13 138/11 deposition [15] 2/10 13/8 30/4 30/6 33/6 corporation [5] 5/25 6/1 6/4 6/4 6/16 crossings [1] 138/10 38/5 41/5 96/20 97/4 97/18 97/19 117/13 crossover [3] 32/22 32/23 33/17 correct [116] 5/19 7/17 37/23 40/5 40/6 131/9 131/16 132/23 41/12 41/14 45/8 45/18 45/21 46/7 46/16 CRR [2] 1/20 153/8 depositions [2] 8/7 8/16 46/17 46/25 47/1 47/3 47/4 47/17 48/21 cry [3] 29/10 36/19 36/24 depth [4] 51/21 88/10 88/11 148/17 55/17 61/24 62/2 62/3 62/15 62/19 62/20 crying [1] 34/15 describe [3] 49/7 78/6 94/22 63/21 64/13 64/15 64/20 64/24 66/9 72/24 CSX [6] 17/17 21/17 134/24 138/1 145/16 described [1] 62/1 73/25 76/25 78/25 79/1 80/19 83/9 84/11 146/19 design [3] 84/20 87/20 149/4 84/13 85/24 85/25 91/12 91/21 91/22 96/4 cul [6] 48/17 55/7 55/11 55/14 55/15 103/8 designated [1] 6/2 96/15 96/16 98/6 100/8 100/20 102/9 cul-de-sac [6] 48/17 55/7 55/11 55/14 designed [6] 33/10 33/15 73/22 73/23 102/22 104/16 105/21 106/4 106/10 106/17 55/15 103/8 75/17 149/3 culvert [4] 32/23 33/5 34/18 120/7 106/20 106/22 107/1 107/9 107/16 107/18 desirable [1] 75/19 cure [5] 24/19 24/23 59/15 84/17 130/17 107/21 108/25 109/15 109/17 109/21 destroyed [1] 60/7 110/11 110/14 112/8 113/16 113/17 113/18 current [2] 93/3 93/5 determination [1] 141/25 113/19 114/22 116/24 117/2 118/18 118/19 customers [1] 63/23 determine [2] 11/16 15/10 cut [53] 3/25 19/9 19/11 20/19 20/24 21/2 determined [1] 81/9 118/25 119/1 122/5 122/12 123/16 124/20 125/1 126/7 126/8 126/11 126/13 134/1 21/11 22/7 22/11 23/4 24/11 24/15 26/20 determines [1] 11/2 134/2 134/24 140/25 141/8 142/2 142/3 29/22 30/7 33/6 45/9 45/10 45/14 46/12 determining [2] 13/16 15/12

Case: 3:06-cv-02950-JZ Dot 65/13 38/9 58/250/0/22/86/484/24 85/12 01 73/13.75/3380/7 86/4 87/20 87/22 88/20 86/6 86/16 86/22 87/2 87/4 87/6 87/8 87/10 88/23 88/24 90/14 124/24 146/2 147/5 devaluation [1] 23/16 88/11 90/1 92/2 93/19 95/8 95/15 95/18 drainage [31] 25/8 33/5 33/10 33/14 34/18 96/20 96/22 96/23 97/9 97/24 98/2 99/10 43/21 70/4 72/24 73/1 80/16 83/23 83/24 developed [1] 69/3 developer [1] 92/10 99/14 99/16 99/17 99/24 100/5 100/24 84/15 85/4 85/12 88/1 105/9 105/12 105/16 developers [2] 26/14 68/23 105/19 106/6 120/7 123/17 125/9 125/13 100/25 101/6 101/19 102/6 104/7 106/5 development [21] 1/3 26/16 29/12 29/16 106/9 106/10 106/12 106/13 106/16 106/18 125/24 146/18 148/25 149/20 149/25 150/1 29/20 30/10 37/3 62/6 62/10 68/4 68/5 109/22 113/10 113/20 117/16 117/21 drained [6] 23/12 23/13 43/14 147/7 150/23 150/23 68/18 69/14 70/12 80/15 106/24 107/19 117/24 118/2 118/8 118/10 118/15 122/1 109/25 110/5 115/13 115/20 123/6 123/14 124/24 128/4 130/3 130/9 draining [2] 43/10 120/3 developments [3] 34/3 34/6 111/5 130/10 130/16 132/4 132/6 133/12 133/20 drains [4] 44/4 69/19 73/19 88/21 diameter [3] 20/19 146/2 146/22 134/7 139/11 139/15 141/5 142/4 143/15 draw [1] 85/24 did [173] 143/16 145/11 147/11 147/24 149/9 150/22 drawing [2] 22/13 132/3 didn't [50] 9/3 18/21 19/1 20/24 22/12 151/10 drawings [4] 73/3 133/15 146/11 146/13 25/23 26/5 32/12 32/24 33/19 34/13 35/23 Docket [1] 1/3 drawn [1] 41/10 43/5 45/9 46/10 63/1 64/6 66/11 78/14 document [5] 4/15 83/4 114/10 131/19 drew [1] 73/3 94/14 98/24 99/8 107/7 108/25 109/1 drive [3] 1/15 33/25 143/2 111/19 111/22 113/12 113/18 113/20 118/5 documents [4] 4/22 70/16 115/9 118/1 driven [1] 144/5 driveway [4] 38/17 48/19 49/16 54/2 118/17 118/18 118/20 123/18 124/16 does [25] 2/10 12/6 14/15 15/7 28/17 driving [2] 93/13 133/24 drove [5] 19/3 93/15 132/24 134/5 144/8 124/25 130/24 133/15 142/2 142/24 144/19 38/25 39/23 55/13 75/2 75/6 83/20 89/22 146/23 148/11 148/14 148/17 148/20 149/7 89/24 101/5 106/23 106/25 109/9 112/23 150/22 151/15 113/1 123/14 132/7 132/12 138/19 138/21 dry [1] 73/12 difference [1] 27/5 ducks [1] 24/6 different [5] 5/24 31/1 70/8 70/10 73/15 doesn't [16] 18/2 23/25 43/19 53/12 59/23 due [2] 6/14 93/1 62/24 84/9 84/20 112/2 131/21 139/7 differently [1] 14/20 dug [2] 143/5 143/8 differing [1] 6/11 difficult [3] 79/17 102/19 108/8 146/17 147/1 147/5 147/9 151/8 duly [3] 37/11 48/7 66/17 dogs [1] 53/4 dumped [1] 35/4 dig [3] 27/12 32/8 32/18 doing [6] 51/6 52/18 54/16 85/6 110/5 during [16] 3/11 7/16 8/7 13/4 15/24 15/24 digging [2] 86/16 142/20 150/13 15/25 16/1 23/18 30/18 33/13 36/21 41/5 digs [1] 3/12 dollars [2] 88/6 137/5 129/4 140/6 143/1 diminished [3] 21/13 26/21 27/7 duty [7] 11/2 11/4 11/14 11/15 12/10 12/16 don't [128] 5/13 8/17 20/2 20/23 26/1 13/12 diminishment [2] 23/17 27/8 27/10 28/8 28/15 28/17 29/9 29/10 29/12 dip [1] 24/14 34/4 34/22 36/15 36/19 36/19 45/13 45/15 DIRECT [3] 37/13 48/9 66/19 46/18 47/5 53/22 57/7 60/6 62/13 62/21 directed [1] 3/14 63/3 63/13 64/21 66/12 66/24 71/9 72/5 e-mailed [1] 129/3 direction [2] 64/20 145/5 73/19 73/21 80/3 82/13 82/18 85/12 91/25 e-mails [1] 129/6 each [11] 3/6 3/14 5/17 12/2 13/18 14/2 92/13 95/17 95/23 96/24 97/11 98/7 98/8 directive [1] 141/9 14/8 14/11 108/7 113/15 137/19 directly [2] 4/20 146/3 99/1 99/3 99/5 99/6 99/8 99/19 99/19 99/21 dirt [8] 23/20 24/7 35/3 35/9 35/9 87/18 101/2 101/2 101/3 101/20 103/19 103/22 earlier [2] 20/3 101/13 early [4] 17/14 26/6 46/14 76/2 106/7 107/2 107/25 108/2 108/2 109/24 142/20 150/20 earth [1] 24/14 disagree [1] 31/2 110/12 110/12 110/23 110/25 112/6 112/9 disagreeing [1] 36/8 112/14 112/17 112/25 114/24 115/4 115/6 easement [3] 17/20 111/18 138/2 easements [1] 89/5 disallow [1] 137/17 115/7 115/25 117/7 117/7 117/11 117/11 disappointment [1] 9/21 117/12 117/23 118/2 118/7 118/7 118/9 easier [1] 69/14 disbelieve [3] 13/15 14/5 14/16 118/12 118/13 119/4 119/8 119/12 119/16 easily [4] 4/18 4/21 29/21 30/11 edge [1] 150/25 discharging [1] 84/7 119/20 119/22 123/5 123/7 123/8 123/9 disclosure [1] 10/6 124/14 125/9 125/11 125/13 125/17 125/18 education [1] 68/10 discourse [1] 3/13 125/20 125/21 125/21 125/21 128/12 effect [1] 11/16 discovery [2] 8/16 120/5 128/25 129/10 129/11 131/16 132/22 134/6 efficient [1] 56/21 138/25 139/4 141/11 141/13 143/10 144/16 efforts [1] 7/23 discrepancies [1] 14/14 discrepancy [2] 14/20 14/21 eight [6] 26/7 26/9 40/21 67/14 79/2 129/4 149/24 152/8 either [16] 3/16 3/23 4/21 5/2 10/11 16/13 discuss [1] 140/16 done [53] 6/15 10/11 19/7 22/6 22/13 22/13 28/11 35/13 36/2 37/1 47/9 49/18 discussed [1] 3/4 20/10 23/6 33/23 34/4 34/5 62/9 64/20 discussion [1] 48/2 57/23 58/2 58/10 59/1 59/7 59/17 60/9 110/20 118/7 128/10 discussions [1] 9/14 61/10 64/8 65/22 80/7 80/21 80/21 81/5 elm [1] 38/20 81/9 81/17 83/12 84/17 85/16 85/23 93/15 else [5] 27/6 74/2 95/14 109/2 109/7 dispute [2] 23/1 36/3 disputes [2] 27/9 30/20 disregard [5] 12/24 31/21 43/6 52/1 57/15 95/15 96/20 96/23 97/4 97/5 111/25 112/1 else's [4] 4/23 135/6 135/10 137/7 114/21 115/14 115/17 115/21 116/2 116/15 embarrassing [1] 8/5 distributed [1] 139/23 116/16 118/22 119/7 120/22 121/4 143/3 emphasis [1] 11/23 emphasize [1] 32/11 distribution [1] 128/1 151/22 district [4] 1/1 1/1 1/11 145/14 door [2] 4/4 63/4 employee [1] 127/5 disturbed [3] 132/12 132/12 132/17 down [58] 4/6 17/5 17/10 18/17 19/4 19/9 employees [1] 135/17 empty [2] 99/12 112/16 disturbing [2] 132/18 132/20 20/12 20/23 22/3 22/7 23/9 23/10 24/3 ditch [9] 22/14 23/14 32/14 32/16 42/3 26/20 28/13 29/13 29/18 30/21 33/25 36/1 encroached [2] 131/22 137/6 42/10 42/23 143/10 146/19 36/23 39/12 41/24 42/1 42/17 43/20 45/9 encroachment [5] 36/9 36/16 103/15 ditches [2] 75/4 142/19 45/10 45/14 45/18 45/21 46/2 47/21 52/11 103/21 140/16 divert [1] 4/6 54/15 61/16 61/17 66/14 72/5 74/24 76/23 encroachments [1] 132/8 end [12] 10/1 29/18 48/1 55/14 55/15 **DIVISION** [1] 1/2 76/24 77/8 78/12 102/1 102/1 102/3 103/7 divvying [1] 123/13 108/9 117/16 126/19 127/11 131/4 132/8 71/11 72/4 90/20 90/21 92/18 103/21 do [119] 2/23 5/2 5/14 10/22 19/1 21/16 132/14 132/25 134/5 147/20 113/11 dozens [4] 19/10 19/10 132/8 132/9 23/18 23/19 24/24 27/21 28/4 29/10 35/8 ending [1] 28/14 ends [1] 28/12 38/5 38/13 40/20 42/8 42/13 44/3 44/16 draft [1] 9/18 enforces [1] 11/1 45/3 46/19 47/25 49/1 49/1 49/3 49/4 49/23 drain [25] 15/2 22/23 23/6 23/24 23/25 50/9 51/8 52/17 57/4 60/6 62/16 62/22 63/4 23/25 25/7 32/24 34/21 44/11 46/25 73/4 engage [1] 136/16

Case: 3:06-cv-02950-JZ Do¢ \$6/1236/24 51/264/1632/2469/20 36/24 0 45/20 45/24 45/25 46/3 45/5 46/5 77/11 100/15 100/19 101/4 131/18 146/13 77/19 77/21 78/14 78/19 79/6 79/8 79/12 engineer [21] 15/2 23/2 24/12 33/4 33/10 Exhibits [1] 118/11 79/17 79/20 existed [2] 41/6 52/23 73/3 85/24 90/7 102/12 120/17 126/16 few [8] 21/1 24/4 68/11 68/14 70/8 79/18 128/24 135/23 139/5 145/14 145/22 146/6 existence [1] 147/17 110/20 129/22 existing [4] 28/24 78/12 89/7 104/11 exists [1] 75/7 Fifth [3] 19/17 58/2 61/6 146/8 146/14 150/10 150/21 engineered [1] 85/7 Fifty [2] 38/3 67/14 engineering [13] 25/11 34/23 69/23 70/6 expect [2] 33/7 88/11 Fifty-eight [1] 67/14 Fifty-two [1] 38/3 85/13 85/23 87/20 91/6 127/25 128/3 128/5 expected [4] 5/10 106/12 127/6 127/8 experience [8] 14/24 69/4 85/12 86/16 128/14 135/3 figure [3] 117/9 132/2 140/23 engineers [6] 22/25 35/2 120/16 128/2 86/18 87/5 87/6 142/4 figured [1] 124/16 file [5] 2/5 2/16 2/21 106/11 106/12 136/4 145/15 experienced [2] 4/3 4/4 expert [14] 5/2 14/23 15/8 15/9 25/11 enough [3] 9/1 9/21 142/25 filed [12] 2/12 4/15 9/5 9/9 105/9 105/20 entire [5] 7/16 16/1 18/11 39/15 119/14 25/12 30/23 31/4 31/7 34/16 86/25 103/20 106/6 106/8 106/14 123/18 125/9 125/14 entitled [4] 6/12 7/4 127/4 153/4 filing [1] 9/4 103/23 119/17 entity [2] 6/17 7/4 fill [5] 23/20 24/7 88/10 142/20 143/1 expertise [3] 80/10 82/3 97/5 entryway [1] 72/12 experts [2] 25/11 31/9 filled [4] 142/19 143/7 148/4 150/20 environment [1] 111/6 expiring [1] 3/9 filling [1] 32/16 explain [9] 57/21 70/25 71/10 80/5 93/21 94/5 94/25 130/22 146/21 film [1] 116/22 final [5] 11/11 14/9 70/9 70/9 70/10 equal [1] 60/11 equally [1] 10/24 equipment [3] 32/8 32/17 50/11 explained [1] 142/24 finally [3] 111/20 122/6 122/15 equivocation [1] 107/20 exposed [1] 24/15 financial [1] 114/2 find [4] 10/18 15/6 93/12 143/22 erroneously [1] 14/17 exposing [1] 92/19 establish [2] 74/10 78/22 express [2] 97/5 99/18 Findlay [4] 25/12 33/12 69/25 70/2 established [1] 10/23 expressing [1] 43/4 fine [1] 3/11 finger [1] 34/12 finish [6] 58/1 108/12 129/25 130/3 137/20 estate [1] 26/17 extend [1] 18/3 estimate [5] 51/25 86/22 87/3 87/11 87/19 extent [1] 8/24 estimates [3] 25/8 80/19 82/9 143/14 extra [1] 32/20 even [20] 20/8 29/8 29/10 29/12 29/14 extremely [1] 57/20 finishing [1] 24/7 29/16 32/12 34/13 58/16 62/4 62/18 103/7 Finkbeiner [1] 141/10 103/15 109/20 115/13 115/20 118/4 128/15 firm [4] 6/18 6/19 69/23 70/6 faces [1] 48/19 133/23 150/17 first [26] 10/1 11/6 19/16 21/12 26/14 facility [1] 3/24 fact [41] 11/15 12/4 12/14 12/17 14/7 event [4] 7/16 15/11 20/15 28/18 26/15 28/7 30/24 37/8 37/11 38/25 48/7 57/22 66/17 67/7 67/15 69/3 92/22 100/3 events [1] 33/12 14/13 14/22 15/10 18/9 30/18 31/1 33/3 eventually [4] 4/7 23/14 44/6 87/21 116/7 128/18 128/22 134/4 145/1 145/25 ever [15] 33/1 33/5 46/8 61/11 61/13 64/6 34/11 43/9 45/16 61/7 61/15 62/4 62/4 146/1 67/7 83/25 128/10 128/15 134/9 142/7 62/18 63/6 64/1 64/19 84/19 91/23 96/14 fit [1] 29/6 five [5] 33/15 67/2 107/24 151/6 151/12 149/17 149/20 149/25 100/3 101/21 102/8 102/12 107/14 109/19 every [4] 20/20 62/5 98/16 98/17 115/23 118/16 119/21 120/4 120/9 120/12 five-year [1] 33/15 everybody [3] 22/8 50/19 150/14 125/8 129/12 143/4 flags [3] 135/25 136/7 136/11 everyone [2] 95/9 95/10 flood [5] 33/13 33/14 33/15 84/3 84/9 factors [1] 88/10 everything [10] 21/3 21/3 22/7 27/6 29/14 facts [5] 13/24 14/17 25/24 27/23 141/20 flooding [20] 3/19 4/3 4/5 4/23 4/25 4/25 45/24 46/4 69/21 95/2 104/24 15/3 18/25 23/16 24/22 76/8 81/5 81/10 factual [1] 27/9 evidence [59] 4/7 10/25 11/2 11/5 11/8 faint [1] 40/12 fair [11] 26/3 27/22 60/14 60/14 89/11 81/17 82/2 83/13 92/3 112/4 131/1 131/6 flooding-type [1] 112/4 11/8 11/9 11/16 11/21 12/1 12/5 12/11 floods [1] 33/12 floor [1] 116/7 12/12 12/18 13/1 13/5 14/10 14/10 15/12 122/3 123/13 135/22 135/24 137/3 148/23 15/18 15/20 16/19 16/20 16/21 17/17 18/4 fairly [2] 28/4 75/2 18/13 18/21 19/2 20/1 20/1 20/5 20/15 21/2 fall [1] 144/8 flow [2] 84/5 84/8 21/12 21/16 21/21 22/16 22/20 24/3 24/10 foliage [2] 49/21 55/13 falling [1] 150/20 folks [2] 137/16 152/5 24/19 24/23 25/10 25/25 26/12 27/14 32/20 false [1] 137/7 familiar [3] 41/7 41/15 66/24 follow [3] 10/20 11/4 84/19 follows [5] 3/21 11/6 37/12 48/8 66/18 33/2 33/18 35/10 35/16 35/20 35/21 37/2 37/2 45/13 56/20 136/19 families [1] 63/8 family [4] 49/3 66/22 72/6 72/15 foot [13] 29/19 29/19 71/9 71/11 77/23 exact [3] 30/24 31/3 58/3 examination [16] 37/10 37/13 44/18 48/6 far [9] 47/3 51/19 62/24 68/9 79/5 82/5 79/25 87/25 88/7 88/8 88/9 101/14 144/10 48/9 60/19 65/4 66/3 66/16 66/19 96/10 97/6 135/14 148/24 145/11 farm [7] 102/9 102/14 102/19 103/5 103/6 121/9 125/6 127/2 127/15 130/1 force [1] 14/10 examine [4] 44/16 60/17 96/8 127/5 example [1] 15/1 103/13 103/13 Ford [4] 17/7 75/10 143/5 144/4 farms [1] 102/17 father [2] 38/10 120/17 foreclosure [1] 26/14 foregoing [1] 153/3 exasperate [1] 65/7 excavating [1] 80/21 forget [2] 14/17 58/2 fault [1] 15/6 excavation [6] 17/3 24/13 105/6 105/8 federal [3] 17/25 26/15 92/22 forgot [1] 132/24 form [3] 6/16 14/25 68/17 145/15 145/24 feel [2] 47/24 130/15 former [2] 108/23 132/25 forth [4] 2/23 47/15 100/5 129/6 except [2] 98/8 107/14 feet [39] 18/24 19/9 20/9 20/10 20/13 exception [6] 12/13 82/7 82/7 82/14 20/19 21/1 22/1 24/4 24/25 25/2 27/12 31/2 32/20 37/21 41/7 51/9 51/22 51/23 78/11 102/24 108/23 forward [1] 19/22 excited [1] 108/18 exclude [2] 7/1 10/10 79/2 79/18 105/13 105/17 105/21 105/22 foul [4] 29/10 34/15 36/20 36/24 106/1 123/19 123/21 131/22 134/17 135/12|found [6] 8/6 34/14 67/20 77/8 78/13 135/12 143/4 145/8 147/12 147/15 151/6 149/3 excluded [1] 82/12 exclusive [4] 11/14 13/12 16/24 113/3 151/12 foundation [10] 43/3 43/17 50/24 74/11 Excuse [2] 16/9 65/15 excused [1] 5/12 fell [1] 110/10 78/22 80/9 81/12 81/20 82/5 84/19 feller [2] 50/8 50/9 four [11] 19/4 19/4 25/11 48/23 61/1 61/1 exhibit [32] 38/8 38/24 39/20 40/15 42/9 felt [3] 9/22 150/22 150/24 61/2 102/3 107/24 124/10 124/19 50/5 51/12 52/5 52/13 53/21 54/13 54/22 fence [29] 20/25 21/21 21/22 30/18 30/19 four-by-four [1] 19/4 55/22 70/16 75/2 75/9 76/7 77/5 83/3 89/15 30/20 31/5 31/6 31/8 35/7 35/8 40/9 45/18 frankness [1] 13/22

gone [11] 35/10 50/1 56/7 59/5 62/1 62/17

Case: 3:06-cv-02950-JZ Doc#2/1882/147/b2/25168/1844/9/2 161 o 92/23 93/22/95/5 95/8 109/3 103/4 106/22 good [15] 10/14 16/5 16/25 28/3 32/6 109/21 112/11 112/12 112/12 114/21 118/2 free [1] 30/1 44/20 44/21 51/25 60/21 60/22 61/3 68/4 119/14 124/2 126/18 127/9 128/13 134/18 French [1] 68/23 69/12 69/13 151/25 143/5 143/15 143/16 143/21 151/22 151/23 Friday [2] 2/8 2/17 goodness [2] 18/20 23/19 152/3 hasn't [4] 65/20 91/21 92/1 92/11 got [31] 22/25 23/7 27/20 28/7 32/7 32/7 front [4] 20/20 38/20 52/7 125/22 haul [1] 21/5 frustrating [2] 57/20 58/11 32/8 32/8 33/9 34/16 41/11 46/9 61/9 66/25 fulfill [1] 113/20 68/11 70/9 70/9 70/14 71/8 78/11 81/23 hauling [1] 87/18 full [1] 49/21 106/24 111/16 111/20 111/20 118/24 122/6 have [185] functions [1] 5/24 122/15 123/19 124/2 148/14 haven't [6] 47/7 96/19 97/7 107/19 109/19 fund [1] 122/22 gotten [1] 46/23 110/19 further [16] 3/16 5/4 8/13 10/11 12/18 grabs [1] 110/16 having [3] 9/22 31/20 86/18 grade [1] 151/3 19/2 20/23 44/14 47/20 60/15 65/7 65/25 he [83] 7/20 8/2 8/2 8/3 8/6 8/7 8/8 13/20 96/5 125/3 125/5 145/4 Graffiti [1] 49/24 13/21 15/24 15/25 18/17 19/17 27/18 27/18 30/5 30/5 30/6 30/6 30/7 33/4 33/6 33/7 Graffiti-laden [1] 49/24 GRANITE [16] 1/3 7/11 15/23 34/3 34/6 34/21 34/24 35/23 43/4 43/4 43/17 43/19 gain [2] 98/16 98/17 34/11 62/5 62/11 63/20 68/17 68/24 69/1 50/22 50/22 55/25 56/6 57/1 57/1 57/2 gained [2] 98/11 98/20 106/21 106/22 118/25 136/15 57/15 58/23 58/23 59/19 60/2 65/16 67/11 game [2] 10/6 19/20 Granite's [1] 119/17 75/24 78/23 81/12 81/12 81/24 81/25 82/3 granted [1] 10/9 granting [2] 2/8 3/6 garage [1] 38/18 gas [1] 89/7 84/19 85/9 92/11 92/11 94/14 107/6 107/7 110/14 118/2 118/8 119/12 119/16 119/18 gated [2] 72/9 83/7 grants [1] 12/23 119/20 120/5 121/11 122/9 123/17 123/17 graphic [4] 22/13 72/18 75/10 76/7 gave [5] 32/19 96/14 131/15 141/14 123/18 126/4 128/25 129/1 129/3 131/12 141/17 great [3] 29/15 43/22 45/2 131/14 136/25 144/24 147/3 147/3 147/4 general [6] 18/14 20/17 32/2 67/4 67/5 greater [1] 15/12 150/22 greatest [2] 61/11 61/13 green [2] 25/4 86/13 68/15 He'd [1] 115/9 he'll [3] 8/9 33/7 43/19 generate [1] 93/7 generated [1] 26/18 greenery [2] 17/2 20/13 he's [18] 7/18 7/24 19/21 26/23 27/20 49/6 gentleman [7] 23/11 56/15 60/1 108/6 Greta [2] 67/22 67/25 59/21 81/23 82/8 86/24 108/16 119/10 128/10 135/2 149/8 gross [1] 91/19 119/10 126/1 126/15 144/24 146/9 150/13 gentlemen [7] 16/5 31/18 35/18 56/19 ground [8] 69/13 69/14 73/11 77/3 105/2 head [1] 27/21 82/20 127/3 152/4 121/18 143/6 145/10 headphones [1] 8/8 germane [1] 2/25 grow [1] 139/2 heads [2] 9/15 127/13 get [30] 21/4 30/25 30/25 33/20 35/5 46/18 growing [2] 19/10 29/3 hear [39] 12/11 12/20 13/21 14/20 16/11 18/19 27/14 29/24 29/25 30/1 30/2 30/7 61/8 69/16 80/11 80/19 83/12 86/1 86/3 grown [1] 41/3 88/25 89/3 102/17 105/5 106/9 108/9 guess [2] 16/25 115/9 30/11 30/17 30/23 32/1 32/3 32/10 32/23 108/18 111/11 111/18 112/2 112/6 115/8 32/25 33/3 33/10 33/18 34/1 34/3 36/9 guessing [1] 72/14 122/3 133/23 134/9 137/5 140/22 guy [8] 29/25 33/4 119/9 119/13 120/10 36/14 41/22 43/18 58/13 64/15 64/17 64/17 gets [2] 24/2 24/4 126/1 126/2 126/4 64/22 64/24 64/25 104/12 105/25 115/12 getting [6] 46/24 69/20 82/9 108/20 heard [4] 28/7 35/20 66/5 82/5 Н 116/21 127/22 hearing [4] 7/25 8/6 27/20 64/23 had [74] 3/25 6/3 8/24 8/25 9/8 10/16 hearsay [6] 44/1 65/16 81/7 82/7 122/17 giant [1] 52/6 123/1 girl [1] 139/3 13/21 17/15 19/10 19/17 20/18 21/5 31/12 give [14] 11/21 12/4 12/7 16/18 31/5 41/9 31/16 32/25 33/11 46/20 46/23 48/2 49/13 heavily [1] 103/8 heavy [6] 24/2 32/8 50/11 53/7 53/18 71/3 74/11 85/1 87/19 87/24 108/6 121/18 49/18 51/16 58/1 58/6 58/7 58/25 60/12 61/10 64/8 69/4 69/5 69/15 69/20 80/21 76/20 given [9] 4/17 8/19 8/21 12/23 13/10 14/4 84/22 93/16 95/8 95/15 97/12 110/6 110/10 heck [1] 27/12 28/6 82/5 146/14 111/15 111/18 111/19 111/21 113/22 114/1 height [1] 60/8 gives [1] 16/17 114/2 114/13 115/23 119/11 124/24 126/24 held [3] 28/10 83/16 114/14 128/25 129/1 129/1 132/7 134/20 136/10 glare [1] 53/22 Henry [2] 128/9 128/12 137/3 140/11 140/21 144/5 144/13 144/14 her [19] 3/20 5/11 13/19 13/22 14/15 14/25 glass [1] 67/11 Glenn [1] 145/23 144/17 146/5 146/10 146/11 149/2 149/3 19/3 64/6 64/9 129/17 129/20 129/20 globe [1] 120/21 149/3 150/6 150/21 129/25 130/21 130/22 137/20 143/21 go [18] 20/12 23/3 23/25 25/4 30/16 46/10 half [13] 29/11 29/15 61/1 62/6 62/10 149/13 150/15 46/20 57/6 58/1 84/14 89/1 89/4 95/12 62/19 78/2 78/3 78/4 78/4 83/8 118/24 here [110] 5/7 7/6 7/9 7/12 7/16 7/18 7/20 109/3 124/2 137/4 138/11 151/13 7/24 13/10 15/24 15/24 17/1 17/2 17/5 17/6 127/7 goes [4] 23/7 28/13 28/14 30/21 hall [1] 28/10 17/9 17/10 17/10 17/11 17/12 18/17 18/20 hand [9] 5/15 38/7 38/23 40/14 54/12 going [107] 4/1 4/7 4/13 5/6 7/15 7/18 18/25 19/8 19/15 19/16 20/23 20/25 21/7 21/8 21/8 21/17 21/20 22/3 22/7 22/17 23/9 9/18 10/20 16/21 17/17 18/4 18/13 18/16 89/25 90/23 131/18 146/12 18/16 18/21 19/2 19/7 19/8 19/13 19/22 handing [1] 92/21 23/10 23/12 24/3 24/3 24/25 25/1 25/4 26/7 20/15 21/2 21/12 21/17 21/21 21/24 21/25 handle [2] 73/23 123/9 27/13 27/18 27/24 28/19 29/23 33/7 33/25 22/9 22/16 22/20 23/1 23/2 23/2 24/4 24/17 handles [1] 112/19 34/11 36/10 36/11 36/12 39/5 41/9 41/10 24/19 24/21 24/23 25/2 25/10 25/13 25/16 hang [1] 20/10 41/12 42/9 42/11 50/5 51/11 51/12 51/20 26/4 26/12 26/19 26/19 27/3 27/10 27/12 happen [3] 4/1 6/3 9/3 52/7 52/16 52/18 52/23 53/8 53/9 53/14 27/16 29/13 30/14 30/15 30/25 31/4 31/20 happened [11] 16/7 22/11 23/4 27/7 33/17 53/17 53/23 55/15 55/16 70/15 70/22 72/12 36/4 37/3 73/14 76/21 94/22 151/23 33/16 35/15 38/7 38/23 40/10 40/14 43/24 72/12 74/25 75/11 75/15 77/6 77/8 79/10 47/2 50/5 52/13 54/12 54/15 56/23 57/25 happening [2] 8/23 23/8 80/24 84/21 88/14 88/15 88/19 88/20 88/21 88/24 88/24 88/25 89/5 90/1 90/4 96/18 59/10 60/3 61/23 64/23 75/9 84/14 85/6 happens [1] 16/10 88/12 88/22 89/3 89/25 90/23 93/10 97/17 happy [1] 82/14 100/20 110/17 118/14 119/9 124/12 126/13 102/1 102/13 106/10 106/13 106/16 107/11 hard [4] 8/6 27/19 40/6 69/16 127/12 146/17 147/1 108/8 108/11 108/12 109/10 115/20 116/25 harmed [2] 27/15 28/19 herein [3] 37/10 48/6 66/16 130/2 137/16 137/18 139/13 140/11 140/13 has [47] 3/9 5/3 5/17 7/22 9/5 12/5 13/6 hereinafter [3] 37/11 48/7 66/17 142/5 143/15 146/2 146/12 146/18 14/24 22/19 27/2 29/7 41/2 50/10 50/23 high [5] 67/3 68/7 71/11 79/25 145/8

57/23 66/5 73/14 81/25 82/3 83/21 92/7

higher [6] 4/9 18/7 72/4 78/7 151/3 151/7

Case: 3:06-cv-02950-JZ Dothurt 23/92/17/92/17/1/24/08 162 of indicated 1920-3774/17/4/2015/22 19/24 hydro [1] 52/7 41/5 56/18 81/4 85/17 108/4 127/6 132/23 higher-end [1] 72/4 individual [2] 11/25 18/16 inferred [1] 11/23 highest [1] 25/14 highlighted [1] 98/1 l'd [1] 129/17 influenced [1] 11/17 highlights [1] 2/5 information [1] 45/14 I'II [34] 10/19 16/14 28/21 42/5 43/5 43/12 51/1 51/2 56/19 57/14 58/23 59/12 60/2 highly [2] 5/22 7/2 initially [1] 23/18 hike [1] 42/17 71/21 74/5 76/14 77/15 79/15 80/11 80/11 inside [2] 31/6 77/11 him [23] 14/24 18/20 28/7 30/1 43/4 57/4 81/13 85/10 85/20 92/5 92/12 94/2 94/10 inspector [1] 126/18 install [6] 17/22 73/7 84/20 122/20 139/14 59/23 65/17 67/18 67/19 74/11 81/3 82/1 107/7 120/24 122/13 130/9 130/21 143/13 84/20 93/24 109/5 109/12 109/16 126/13 143/24 143/1 I'm [89] 2/14 3/6 4/12 5/17 9/18 9/18 10/11 installation [5] 3/24 4/2 6/10 70/3 89/23 126/16 129/23 129/24 145/25 himself [1] 82/4 10/20 16/9 18/18 18/18 30/6 30/12 31/20 installed [9] 22/22 73/16 85/4 85/8 86/18 hire [1] 69/23 35/15 38/7 38/23 40/10 40/14 41/22 43/24 87/8 112/11 112/12 122/16 hires [1] 81/12 46/24 50/5 52/13 53/21 54/12 54/17 54/17 installing [3] 22/21 85/14 142/22 his [25] 5/11 13/19 13/22 14/15 15/25 installs [4] 32/2 83/21 83/21 90/6 59/10 60/10 61/3 61/14 61/23 62/7 67/3 35/21 36/23 43/18 70/13 80/9 81/24 82/9 72/14 72/20 72/21 75/9 78/4 82/14 82/15 instruct [2] 11/3 31/20 92/11 108/13 108/24 109/5 109/12 109/16 83/3 84/14 87/5 88/24 89/25 90/23 92/21 instruction [6] 9/13 11/25 12/3 20/3 119/14 120/13 120/17 129/14 137/20 94/1 101/9 102/16 103/12 103/25 105/1 141/14 141/17 144/23 145/23 105/24 106/10 108/11 108/12 108/16 instructions [18] 8/19 8/20 8/24 8/25 8/25 108/25 109/10 112/1 114/4 114/16 114/16 9/2 9/19 9/24 10/19 11/11 11/20 11/20 12/2 histories [1] 115/10 history [1] 3/9 116/21 117/25 119/1 121/5 122/25 123/10 12/3 12/4 12/7 15/16 140/19 hold [1] 71/8 123/10 130/7 130/21 132/2 132/15 136/13 instrument [1] 50/7 hole [1] 34/17 137/16 137/18 139/3 143/9 143/22 146/12 integrity [1] 138/9 146/15 149/8 149/16 149/18 150/24 intellectual [1] 10/17 Holland [1] 1/18 Hollow [3] 110/1 118/17 123/6 home [8] 48/24 57/23 58/4 65/20 75/12 intelligence [1] 13/23 I've [7] 6/3 6/15 9/20 67/1 82/5 98/15 123/12 intend [1] 28/4 intended [3] 3/18 10/5 11/23 80/1 80/2 133/9 idea [7] 11/22 46/18 47/6 86/6 87/24 97/13 intention [1] 123/24 homeowner [1] 133/5 Homeowners [2] 72/8 72/9 identification [2] 55/3 82/8 inter [1] 17/15 homes [2] 26/7 121/12 identify [2] 53/25 57/15 inter-urban [1] 17/15 honestly [2] 28/5 88/2 if [93] 3/7 5/22 6/19 8/10 8/17 9/25 10/11 interconnected [1] 21/9 Honor [56] 3/17 5/16 5/21 6/6 6/14 7/3 11/20 12/13 12/19 12/22 13/9 13/23 15/2 interest [3] 13/23 50/11 99/18 interested [1] 28/11 16/4 19/21 19/21 20/6 28/2 31/25 35/15 15/6 16/14 16/16 18/19 20/23 21/6 21/20 37/9 42/4 43/16 44/17 47/24 50/17 51/13 24/13 26/1 26/2 29/8 29/14 30/24 32/12 interesting [2] 17/24 34/12 52/19 53/22 54/9 54/25 56/5 56/25 58/21 36/3 36/22 36/23 37/10 40/11 41/2 46/3 interestingly [3] 20/22 27/2 36/5 59/19 59/22 72/22 77/16 79/13 80/10 81/11 47/2 48/6 50/6 50/22 51/14 53/8 54/18 interrogatories [2] 9/20 9/24 81/23 82/6 82/17 83/1 84/18 86/24 93/24 56/22 57/1 58/22 58/23 60/6 62/14 63/11 interrupt [2] 108/17 149/9 94/8 94/10 96/5 96/9 125/4 126/22 129/17 63/14 66/16 66/24 67/11 74/10 78/22 82/1 interrupting [1] 129/20 129/25 130/1 130/20 143/11 143/21 150/11 86/3 89/4 91/11 95/17 101/3 102/14 103/12 intertwined [2] 19/19 20/7 150/13 152/2 104/1 104/1 104/2 104/14 105/19 105/25 interviews [1] 10/17 Honor's [1] 3/19 106/2 106/5 106/15 106/18 107/25 108/16 into [30] 2/2 13/5 13/7 16/21 18/3 22/2 23/13 23/13 23/24 25/7 34/1 42/3 42/9 **HONORABLE** [1] 1/10 110/12 111/16 112/18 115/13 116/10 116/12 119/22 125/19 128/25 130/13 42/10 42/22 43/10 43/14 44/11 46/19 46/22 hooked [1] 46/9 hope [4] 9/25 27/13 27/22 149/8 131/16 134/6 138/10 139/4 139/7 140/23 47/2 63/6 67/19 68/11 84/7 87/21 87/21 hopefully [1] 10/18 Hospice [5] 3/18 3/21 4/3 4/8 17/10 149/24 150/22 88/21 90/18 93/15 ignore [2] 11/25 140/19 intriguing [1] 34/14 hour [1] 127/7 imagining [1] 143/9 introduce [4] 16/21 37/15 48/11 66/21 house [36] 21/18 24/5 26/11 26/11 26/13 immediately [1] 63/4 introduced [1] 68/1 impact [3] 71/24 94/1 94/6 30/1 38/18 57/25 58/2 58/6 58/9 60/13 intrusive [1] 25/19 60/25 61/8 61/17 61/19 63/20 63/23 63/25 impacted [2] 93/22 95/5 investigation [2] 148/24 150/1 65/8 65/11 65/11 66/5 72/15 75/11 76/1 impartial [1] 27/22 invoices [1] 70/13 107/14 107/17 108/24 109/4 109/4 109/11 involved [4] 4/20 69/5 69/7 72/23 importance [1] 12/6 irrelevant [4] 7/4 28/18 143/12 143/15 109/16 116/6 120/11 124/3 important [1] 14/22 houses [6] 41/23 63/17 72/4 115/5 115/24 impossible [1] 60/4 116/1 isn't [13] 111/24 129/7 133/14 135/1 improved [1] 81/24 housing [5] 34/1 34/6 61/11 61/13 72/6 improvement [2] 49/9 58/19 135/16 135/21 135/24 138/1 138/5 139/19 how [58] 4/12 15/5 22/1 30/9 32/20 37/24 in [390] 143/4 148/23 151/17 38/2 39/7 40/20 42/13 46/18 48/22 49/5 inaccurate [1] 136/20 issue [17] 2/12 4/14 6/12 6/24 14/7 14/9 14/12 28/19 31/22 32/22 111/8 111/9 119/6 49/7 50/9 51/19 57/21 57/24 63/6 63/11 inactive [2] 104/16 104/24 63/11 63/17 63/23 67/13 67/18 67/18 71/9 Inc [1] 3/21 119/22 122/9 129/1 143/16 inch [10] 17/22 22/23 23/7 142/21 146/2 77/22 78/7 78/17 79/5 79/17 81/23 82/21 issues [1] 4/18 85/6 86/1 91/13 91/15 93/12 93/21 95/5 146/4 146/22 148/25 149/17 149/20 it [375] 104/11 107/11 117/21 117/23 119/2 127/19 inches [2] 31/2 36/11 it's [73] 5/25 6/16 6/16 6/16 7/4 16/7 17/15 incident [1] 14/19 132/4 135/14 140/5 140/12 142/24 143/21 18/3 19/17 20/1 21/11 21/24 21/25 23/7 inclined [1] 54/20 145/10 148/2 148/14 148/20 152/4 27/8 28/3 28/16 28/18 29/23 31/2 31/23 how's [1] 110/5 include [1] 13/18 32/11 32/12 34/14 36/18 36/20 38/24 39/25 however [2] 15/7 15/25 includes [1] 66/8 40/12 40/17 43/21 47/5 54/15 54/16 54/18 Huber [4] 145/23 146/8 146/10 147/2 including [3] 24/6 26/10 104/19 58/9 58/11 65/21 71/2 72/14 74/25 76/12 Huffman [1] 113/5 incorrect [1] 109/1 76/20 80/9 81/7 82/20 83/5 85/8 89/5 93/25 huge [2] 35/2 84/7 increase [1] 133/9 97/14 100/9 101/7 101/25 103/5 104/3 huh [3] 70/19 142/11 150/2 incurred [1] 91/7 106/24 107/10 107/25 108/7 109/19 111/3 hundred [4] 26/22 41/6 88/6 143/4 indicate [10] 3/4 3/7 4/15 10/3 19/25 51/19 116/23 119/19 123/11 127/17 130/1 143/5 hunting [1] 19/17 83/13 83/19 90/1 93/1 143/12 143/14 147/25 149/24 150/17

45/23 46/246/3 50/8 52/12 53/5 54/23 57/18 59/7 59/17 60/5 67/8 69/18 70/4 71/17 72/4 72/14 73/19 79/7 82/21 95/14 lack [1] 13/23 its [10] 11/8 18/1 18/23 37/4 78/18 92/23 107/17 126/20 130/10 133/9 laden [1] 49/24 95/25 101/4 109/5 116/23 127/1 129/17 itself [3] 13/1 49/14 95/6 ladies [6] 16/5 31/18 56/19 82/20 127/3 134/17 142/8 146/16 147/12 149/16 150/18 152/3 152/5 land [9] 4/8 24/18 68/2 69/11 91/5 102/4 liked [1] 69/10 likely [1] 80/6 JACK [7] 1/10 67/15 68/1 112/19 112/25 105/14 137/7 151/4 landmarks [1] 31/1 limine [2] 2/9 2/22 117/19 119/4 Jack's [2] 67/21 67/25 large [8] 20/18 29/6 38/20 49/12 49/20 limit [1] 3/8 Jacqueline [3] 33/25 48/14 86/2 104/8 139/14 150/18 limited [3] 5/23 6/5 68/17 January [2] 99/11 118/21 limits [2] 3/5 18/1 laser [1] 53/11 January 2004 [1] 118/21 Laskey [24] 6/8 7/22 7/24 7/25 8/6 8/15 line [38] 18/24 20/24 21/6 21/23 21/23 Jeep [1] 19/3 15/23 27/15 27/18 33/3 56/9 56/12 56/23 22/15 24/11 25/13 28/18 28/24 28/24 32/19 Jenkins [2] 126/1 126/12 67/16 68/16 81/2 90/25 112/19 112/25 36/8 37/18 38/19 39/14 39/18 45/18 70/22 job [6] 31/4 32/21 35/13 36/2 127/22 115/9 117/4 117/19 120/4 123/14 71/12 78/3 78/3 79/9 92/18 97/19 104/7 150/24 Laskey's [1] 27/19 105/22 112/6 117/16 122/16 122/20 131/24 133/17 134/17 135/17 138/8 140/13 147/1 Joe [1] 135/3 last [21] 2/8 2/14 2/16 4/24 9/14 10/4 22/4 John [4] 37/17 50/12 128/24 146/5 linear [2] 88/8 88/9 39/9 39/22 46/8 58/6 63/9 91/25 105/13 lines [8] 15/4 24/16 41/21 41/23 46/12 46/21 70/23 70/25 John-Deere-type [1] 50/12 105/17 105/21 106/1 123/6 123/11 123/19 joint [1] 9/12 149/9 late [4] 10/6 26/6 76/1 144/7 link [4] 20/25 78/14 79/17 79/20 joint-proposed [1] 9/12 judge [8] 1/11 6/23 10/24 11/1 11/3 30/19 late-in-the-game [1] 10/6 list [1] 82/13 34/9 65/9 lats [3] 35/25 36/1 36/5 listed [1] 112/23 judging [1] 14/9 Judy [1] 3/18 junk [1] 29/3 listen [3] 18/19 27/23 65/10 launching [1] 9/22 Lavoy [1] 69/6 listened [1] 129/13 law [7] 6/18 6/19 7/9 11/3 11/4 11/11 29/7 listening [1] 9/3 Lawrence [1] 67/22 literally [4] 36/6 59/6 97/20 127/11 jurisdictional [1] 18/1 jurors [3] 8/10 10/25 13/12 laws [1] 25/22 little [9] 17/8 21/16 28/22 34/9 41/13 48/23 jury [83] 1/7 1/10 2/2 2/4 2/6 5/1 8/19 9/12 lawsuit [5] 4/21 31/12 31/20 67/8 128/15 50/13 74/22 147/14 9/19 9/19 10/12 10/15 10/19 16/11 19/25 lawyer [3] 11/18 108/11 108/13 live [14] 16/25 37/16 37/17 37/18 48/12 lawyers [11] 10/24 10/25 11/7 11/11 12/8 36/21 37/15 37/16 38/15 39/7 40/15 41/10 48/13 49/8 49/12 57/18 66/22 66/23 110/25 41/18 43/5 47/25 48/1 48/11 48/12 49/7 12/9 12/13 12/13 13/8 15/19 137/19 111/3 113/22 50/6 51/19 52/1 52/19 57/15 57/18 62/9 layers [1] 83/17 lived [6] 37/24 48/22 53/16 67/2 99/12 66/21 67/10 67/13 67/15 67/18 69/10 70/25 layout [4] 69/23 70/7 83/5 83/6 119/14 72/1 72/11 73/1 74/22 75/17 76/16 78/6 layouts [1] 70/8 lives [6] 13/18 29/25 56/24 63/3 119/13 78/17 80/6 83/4 84/4 84/16 86/9 87/19 120/10 layperson [1] 4/13 87/24 88/14 91/23 93/1 93/5 93/21 93/21 leading [6] 42/4 55/25 76/11 76/12 93/25 living [3] 49/1 49/10 57/20 94/5 95/1 103/17 108/8 111/23 112/2 122/11 LLC [2] 6/16 6/18 121/15 123/8 127/19 128/18 129/11 130/13 leaning [2] 35/7 35/8 loads [1] 23/20 136/20 137/14 137/22 145/13 146/1 146/21 learn [3] 10/7 19/13 98/16 loan [6] 7/1 7/3 26/16 92/23 118/11 122/7 learned [2] 50/13 82/8 loaned [1] 58/4 just [54] 8/15 16/20 18/3 18/10 20/3 21/9 located [3] 22/12 90/19 134/3 lease [1] 67/6 least [8] 26/21 46/15 62/19 107/24 115/17 22/17 24/1 27/23 29/14 29/23 30/21 31/1 location [3] 69/12 69/13 77/19 31/6 32/18 32/20 36/16 44/1 45/4 49/11 116/22 118/24 129/4 logistical [1] 10/16 50/22 52/19 54/17 59/5 64/25 67/11 71/7 long [16] 7/12 8/9 9/8 10/8 28/9 37/24 39/7 leave [3] 16/14 82/23 136/4 leaves [1] 20/8 47/13 48/22 82/21 103/13 107/25 111/18 72/4 76/5 85/9 93/13 93/15 94/18 99/25 100/18 102/14 109/10 111/23 111/24 114/4 leaving [1] 133/8 119/10 130/4 147/4 long-standing [1] 10/8 116/23 119/19 119/21 125/19 127/13 led [1] 7/23 left [12] 22/7 26/10 38/18 39/14 40/1 46/4 132/17 133/17 134/3 142/5 144/5 144/6 long-term [1] 111/18 146/15 146/25 147/9 longer [1] 31/11 look [12] 23/19 38/25 51/11 52/5 52/13 52/16 95/3 95/4 95/18 106/3 106/17 legal [2] 6/17 7/4 length [2] 45/21 124/14 53/9 55/10 77/5 83/3 89/14 91/9 133/18 lens [1] 54/15 keen [1] 50/10 looked [15] 21/19 41/2 45/18 45/23 46/2 keep [7] 3/13 3/13 28/22 36/18 102/1 less [6] 25/18 25/18 25/18 36/17 36/19 46/2 49/16 53/16 54/23 55/7 57/10 93/15 109/16 127/13 60/10 104/12 142/7 149/2 looking [13] 38/17 38/19 39/2 39/4 39/12 Kevin [3] 48/13 48/22 65/6 let [18] 19/10 60/13 82/16 84/21 85/20 key [2] 28/21 33/19 39/24 40/3 46/4 54/1 67/23 75/11 134/6 88/13 104/18 108/17 111/25 120/11 129/19 kids [1] 67/2 129/25 131/18 132/4 134/14 137/19 143/14 146/15 looks [5] 24/21 50/8 52/12 79/7 146/16 kind [12] 8/5 9/1 22/9 41/12 70/3 71/17 147/5 72/2 108/18 111/4 119/6 128/21 128/22 let's [18] 38/25 41/11 43/18 52/5 55/3 71/3 loss [1] 92/2 74/10 84/12 92/25 94/18 94/18 106/21 kinds [1] 124/3 lot [57] 21/18 22/17 23/21 24/21 26/4 kitchen [1] 39/2 129/19 129/19 137/14 143/18 150/14 26/11 26/13 27/9 32/7 33/19 33/19 34/4 knew [7] 42/24 43/4 134/23 134/25 140/21 150/15 48/15 48/17 49/13 50/11 51/20 58/13 58/14 letter [2] 139/16 139/18 61/19 64/1 69/16 73/18 75/12 76/9 76/16 142/16 147/17 Knight [5] 4/4 4/9 17/11 19/16 101/22 level [3] 83/14 116/9 143/6 77/6 77/9 80/1 88/9 90/12 91/11 95/8 95/15 knocked [1] 34/17 liability [4] 5/23 6/5 68/17 141/23 99/8 99/12 99/20 100/9 100/10 100/14 license [2] 83/17 83/17 100/15 101/9 101/14 101/18 107/11 107/14 know [154] knowledge [18] 43/15 44/12 44/13 83/21 lied [1] 63/2 109/20 109/21 111/12 113/15 119/7 120/10 93/8 93/11 98/11 98/16 98/16 98/17 98/20 life [3] 31/1 38/1 119/14 120/13 123/6 124/2 124/3 134/4 lift [1] 35/2 102/10 103/6 112/22 113/12 117/6 124/1 lots [74] 21/14 22/4 24/20 25/3 26/5 26/7 light [1] 54/18 26/9 26/9 26/10 26/17 26/18 26/20 26/22 known [2] 13/8 48/15 like [47] 4/19 5/25 6/18 8/11 20/19 22/6 27/4 27/6 27/9 33/21 33/22 33/23 36/15 knows [4] 43/17 52/19 81/12 95/9 24/14 27/12 29/23 31/4 32/6 32/19 43/21 36/17 51/21 63/11 63/11 72/14 73/17 77/25

master [3] 83/16 83/16 83/19

materials [1] 144/18

164 Case: 3:06-cv-02950-JZ Doumatter 301 Falson 10 33/16460/3 164724 0 Moleen 312028/6-128/13935/1 moment [3] 44/1 70/15 100/18 102/8 118/16 119/21 125/9 153/4 Monclova [3] 66/23 66/24 67/1 lots... [47] 80/5 80/7 83/6 89/5 89/11 89/16 matters [1] 22/5 mature [1] 49/22 89/16 91/11 95/5 97/6 98/2 98/20 98/24 Monday [1] 9/17 99/10 102/25 103/1 103/7 103/8 103/15 Maumee [2] 1/15 23/14 money [6] 6/8 26/13 26/18 89/4 111/16 107/22 107/23 110/7 110/10 110/16 111/13 may [40] 1/6 10/14 11/2 11/9 11/10 13/1 114/19 112/16 112/21 113/14 113/25 114/3 114/6 13/5 14/4 14/19 15/1 15/3 15/5 31/15 31/24 monitor [1] 5/14 114/8 114/19 116/12 118/17 118/18 118/20 32/6 34/8 36/18 36/24 37/8 38/8 47/21 month [1] 114/8 monument [10] 21/19 21/21 77/2 77/6 58/23 60/2 60/17 66/14 66/15 75/24 78/23 119/25 120/2 120/6 121/3 121/13 121/16 123/5 123/22 125/19 131/22 87/13 88/24 89/1 96/8 108/5 126/19 126/20 77/20 90/5 90/19 100/11 101/12 101/13 love [1] 7/11 127/10 128/12 130/6 133/11 149/12 monuments [2] 77/12 105/4 more [22] 6/12 6/20 10/16 15/10 24/1 24/7 loved [1] 36/24 maybe [17] 20/13 26/23 26/24 31/2 40/21 lower [4] 25/1 61/8 65/8 89/12 41/6 43/19 46/24 54/16 72/14 77/23 78/11 32/20 35/2 39/25 45/4 56/21 58/12 58/14 lowest [3] 88/14 88/16 88/16 LTD [2] 1/4 68/18 102/11 110/25 111/3 118/2 140/8 58/15 60/11 75/19 89/4 106/22 118/2 118/8 mayor [3] 128/2 141/9 141/13 122/18 147/14 Lucas [3] 18/3 139/5 139/8 McCarthy [17] 24/12 33/4 34/16 35/1 56/5 morning [15] 2/5 2/8 2/12 2/22 10/2 10/14 lunch [6] 127/7 127/8 152/1 152/3 152/4 95/17 119/17 120/6 120/9 120/11 120/12 16/5 28/3 44/20 44/21 60/21 60/22 82/19 152/5 128/24 129/13 129/22 132/13 136/15 146/5 83/11 119/9 most [5] 21/11 34/10 47/25 78/2 80/6 McCarthy's [2] 144/15 144/20 М me [58] 3/14 4/17 6/1 7/6 7/22 7/25 10/21 motion [4] 2/9 2/17 2/22 12/23 motions [1] 3/3 machine [4] 22/7 50/7 50/14 50/14 11/12 16/9 16/11 35/23 37/11 40/17 43/22 machines [5] 20/18 20/18 50/2 50/3 51/5 48/7 49/15 53/4 56/4 56/16 58/4 65/15 mound [1] 24/14 made [8] 9/5 16/2 60/5 70/13 128/2 141/25 66/17 68/1 82/11 82/15 82/16 84/21 85/1 move [3] 28/22 32/9 32/18 151/18 151/21 86/19 87/1 88/13 97/10 98/5 98/22 98/22 moved [1] 63/6 magnitude [2] 60/7 64/16 103/12 104/1 104/4 104/14 104/18 108/17 moving [2] 32/19 127/13 MAI [3] 25/14 25/14 26/18 mailed [1] 129/3 111/25 119/12 120/11 123/11 125/22 Mr [2] 5/24 56/23 128/25 131/15 131/15 131/18 132/4 134/14 Mr. [56] 6/8 6/9 6/15 7/14 7/15 7/22 7/24 139/9 141/17 142/18 143/9 143/14 151/8 7/25 8/2 8/6 8/15 8/16 15/22 15/22 15/23 mails [1] 129/6 main [21] 3/24 4/2 17/22 22/21 22/22 24/12 24/17 27/15 27/15 27/16 27/18 27/19 Meadows [1] 1/18 22/24 23/7 28/12 34/7 38/18 45/7 47/9 mean [20] 9/8 14/16 15/7 33/24 47/11 33/3 44/20 47/22 56/5 56/9 56/12 56/24 49/11 62/16 64/23 69/18 79/13 80/21 94/15 60/21 65/7 68/16 71/3 81/2 90/25 95/17 73/16 76/24 137/4 138/3 138/5 138/15 139/14 142/21 146/4 95/1 99/4 99/7 104/7 118/5 121/22 122/1 96/12 96/21 100/5 115/9 117/4 118/13 maintain [2] 138/8 138/9 139/7 120/4 123/4 125/8 128/6 129/13 129/22 majority [3] 104/15 104/20 109/6 meaning [1] 13/2 132/13 135/1 136/15 141/10 144/15 144/20 means [4] 5/9 13/14 111/12 121/20 make [12] 5/14 12/9 19/5 25/25 59/23 146/10 147/2 60/10 84/20 108/8 109/9 134/18 146/15 mechanical [1] 1/23 Mr. Bahret [2] 65/7 123/4 Mr. Finkbeiner [1] 141/10 mechanically [1] 54/19 151/20 medical [1] 49/2 makes [3] 14/24 18/4 102/19 Mr. Huber [2] 146/10 147/2 making [1] 18/8 meeting [5] 28/10 28/10 146/5 146/25 Mr. Laskey [18] 6/8 7/22 7/24 7/25 8/6 malpractice [1] 6/22 150/21 8/15 15/23 27/15 27/18 33/3 56/9 56/12 man [6] 18/14 20/17 32/1 52/14 126/15 melts [1] 47/14 68/16 81/2 90/25 115/9 117/4 120/4 135/24 memory [2] 13/22 31/22 Mr. Laskey's [1] 27/19 Mr. McCarthy [7] 24/12 56/5 95/17 129/13 mentioned [4] 53/4 86/11 89/15 99/22 maneuver [1] 34/23 129/22 132/13 136/15 manhole [52] 22/12 22/17 22/18 23/9 mere [1] 15/13 merely [1] 14/7 met [9] 67/15 67/18 68/16 96/12 129/13 Mr. McCarthy's [2] 144/15 144/20 23/13 41/6 41/15 41/19 42/1 42/2 42/9 Mr. Moleen [2] 128/6 135/1 42/18 43/10 43/14 44/4 44/11 46/9 46/19 129/22 140/21 146/9 147/2 Mr. Nye [1] 24/17 46/22 46/25 47/2 47/12 75/4 134/3 134/6 146/3 146/19 147/1 147/10 147/11 147/12 meter [3] 84/3 84/4 84/8 Mr. Robon [4] 6/15 15/22 100/5 118/13 147/17 147/20 147/21 147/23 148/3 148/4 metering [1] 84/3 Mr. Robon's [1] 96/21 mic [3] 16/13 16/14 16/16 148/6 148/9 148/12 148/14 148/17 148/21 Mr. Stawinski [2] 56/24 60/21 149/23 149/24 150/3 150/5 150/12 150/17 Mr. Sumner [2] 44/20 47/22 Mr. Taylor [11] 6/9 7/14 7/15 8/2 8/16 mic's [1] 16/10 150/25 151/3 151/12 microphone [2] 41/10 71/3 manner [2] 13/19 65/8 mics [1] 8/9 15/22 27/15 27/16 71/3 96/12 125/8 middle [5] 23/8 39/10 48/3 86/3 149/10 mansions [4] 16/25 72/16 72/17 72/17 Mrs. [2] 127/17 144/2 many [13] 17/15 17/16 20/11 22/1 63/6 might [11] 12/21 29/18 36/11 36/17 88/25 Mrs. Soncrant [2] 127/17 144/2 114/12 117/25 118/8 118/8 133/9 134/7 63/11 63/11 63/17 63/23 134/17 140/12 Ms. [2] 19/3 151/17 Mike [2] 120/11 120/12 mile [1] 18/10 144/2 148/2 Ms. Soncrant [2] 19/3 151/17 map [7] 20/4 21/16 41/10 41/13 51/11 much [17] 22/4 41/4 52/12 58/12 58/15 123/19 124/11 miles [2] 30/21 30/22 66/1 76/4 77/22 78/7 78/11 91/13 91/15 94/11 108/15 121/22 136/3 152/4 mark [2] 69/6 139/10 million [11] 7/1 17/21 18/10 26/16 137/4 marked [13] 38/7 38/23 40/14 54/12 89/25 137/9 137/11 137/12 137/22 137/23 138/2 mud [1] 21/11 90/23 92/21 131/18 135/17 136/1 136/8 mind [4] 24/25 26/25 36/18 65/19 multiple [1] 7/6 minimally [1] 64/12 136/8 146/13 multitude [1] 6/1 minimum [1] 145/11 minute [4] 3/7 24/10 56/14 105/5 markers [2] 133/18 133/19 municipalities [1] 18/6 must [11] 5/10 10/22 11/16 11/17 11/23 market [7] 34/1 34/6 58/6 65/6 66/6 72/3 114/1 minutes [6] 3/6 82/21 82/21 82/22 82/22 11/24 12/12 12/21 13/14 51/14 51/15 marketed [1] 112/13 152/6 my [60] 2/8 2/14 2/16 5/7 7/13 8/4 15/16 marketing [5] 6/9 26/5 72/3 123/5 123/9 misconduct [1] 37/4 18/20 20/3 21/16 23/19 26/24 28/3 28/22 markings [1] 35/10 misheard [1] 35/23 34/12 37/17 38/1 38/10 39/2 39/13 39/19 marks [1] 31/3 Marve [4] 7/11 16/9 52/21 54/14 misinformation [1] 28/6 43/21 44/13 44/22 44/25 45/1 47/24 48/13 mislead [1] 137/14 50/10 53/7 54/2 54/2 57/23 60/12 60/23 mistake [4] 151/18 151/20 151/21 151/23 Marvin [1] 1/14 61/12 64/5 64/17 65/11 67/4 67/4 84/14

modification [1] 134/18

modifications [1] 134/16

85/9 93/11 97/15 98/22 98/22 98/23 102/10

103/5 104/12 112/22 113/12 124/1 134/22

noisy [1] 25/18

none [3] 11/23 63/25 63/25

Nonetheless [2] 2/21 9/24

146/12 14 17 gelD #: 2951 Case: 3:06-cv-02950-JZ Dounting and 139/1024/08 165 of nor [1] 12/6 OHIO [12] 1/1 1/5 1/15 1/18 1/21 3/21 66/23 67/1 83/18 84/2 123/10 123/12 normal [2] 30/16 88/5 my... [5] 135/11 138/12 138/18 141/22 normally [1] 147/4 okay [88] 16/14 35/18 37/24 39/7 39/10 142/1 myself [2] 50/13 146/6 northern [9] 1/1 17/22 18/6 18/11 138/7 39/20 40/22 41/2 42/11 42/15 42/18 42/21 45/6 45/16 46/7 48/22 51/8 52/10 52/13 138/17 138/21 138/23 138/23 Northwest [1] 3/21 53/7 54/4 57/8 59/3 60/15 61/5 61/7 61/19 name [4] 32/2 37/16 48/13 68/24 not [204] 62/14 62/21 63/3 63/17 64/10 65/1 70/22 73/14 75/21 77/5 78/6 79/12 79/24 80/4 name's [3] 37/17 44/22 60/23 notereading [1] 1/24 named [1] 20/16 notes [1] 82/23 86/1 86/6 89/14 91/9 91/21 94/25 97/21 narrow [1] 142/25 nothing [17] 44/14 45/25 46/5 47/20 60/15 99/22 101/3 101/8 102/1 102/7 105/19 65/25 93/19 95/3 95/4 96/5 105/20 129/8 narrower [2] 78/7 78/9 106/21 108/6 109/8 109/18 109/22 111/4 National [1] 19/16 131/7 131/8 143/15 143/16 148/24 112/1 114/15 116/8 117/13 118/4 118/15 natural [2] 43/21 151/11 nature [2] 6/10 93/25 nothing's [1] 143/15 notice [17] 3/23 3/25 4/14 4/16 4/16 4/18 118/16 119/2 119/9 119/21 120/1 120/9 121/24 122/20 125/2 126/4 129/3 130/15 near [8] 28/14 37/19 46/25 47/12 73/7 19/7 22/8 28/7 28/8 28/8 34/20 58/19 93/8 132/7 133/5 133/25 134/22 136/14 137/16 130/17 144/4 144/11 139/15 139/16 139/19 145/8 146/17 148/11 150/9 necessarily [1] 14/16 noticed [8] 20/23 24/13 30/13 47/7 47/10 old [38] 1/3 7/11 15/23 17/13 19/4 34/3 necessity [1] 12/17 58/16 93/14 112/15 34/6 34/11 38/2 40/20 40/21 42/3 49/5 49/6 need [7] 31/13 31/23 32/12 67/11 81/4 49/21 50/10 52/16 52/23 62/5 62/11 63/20 notices [2] 22/8 139/12 now [57] 4/10 8/18 11/4 12/5 15/17 16/19 81/17 139/7 67/13 68/17 68/24 69/1 72/17 106/21 needed [3] 29/5 32/9 83/12 19/17 21/11 23/6 24/20 27/4 29/4 29/8 32/5 106/22 118/25 119/11 119/17 127/19 needs [9] 5/1 60/8 81/9 84/17 85/3 85/3 36/17 38/20 40/9 46/18 48/4 48/23 50/1 136/15 146/18 149/19 150/5 150/12 150/19 85/15 85/23 85/24 53/21 56/19 58/9 58/16 61/8 61/13 61/19 on [228] 64/16 67/5 73/14 76/25 78/12 80/1 83/10 negligent [1] 25/21 on-site [1] 69/22 once [5] 60/12 84/8 106/16 140/6 140/8 one [68] 3/21 3/22 5/7 5/17 6/2 6/12 6/20 neighbor [2] 36/23 44/25 neighbor's [1] 44/10 87/6 88/20 88/21 99/22 99/25 101/4 102/5 103/9 104/3 109/11 109/18 112/10 117/24 neighborhood [2] 58/7 63/7 119/19 123/12 123/17 125/15 127/17 131/9 7/1 7/5 7/5 8/11 14/12 14/22 14/23 15/23 neighboring [2] 78/15 79/6 138/10 142/18 143/10 17/8 17/9 17/9 17/12 17/24 17/25 27/17 neighbors [2] 72/5 147/8 Nowhere [1] 95/14 38/25 39/10 46/22 49/25 51/5 56/10 56/12 number [30] 3/21 14/8 14/11 15/14 38/8 58/7 58/8 59/5 59/6 63/9 63/19 64/6 69/6 neither [1] 135/1 38/24 42/9 48/15 50/6 51/12 53/21 58/5 nervous [2] 67/10 71/7 69/7 71/11 77/8 82/11 86/12 86/20 87/8 never [9] 6/3 6/15 6/24 42/22 47/10 62/25 70/16 72/20 72/21 75/2 75/9 76/7 82/12 88/23 90/20 90/21 92/18 95/13 109/20 103/5 140/24 149/3 83/3 91/2 91/10 92/13 95/20 95/21 100/16 109/21 111/8 114/21 115/5 115/10 115/24 new [4] 37/18 82/11 85/11 98/17 100/19 101/4 131/19 139/24 116/1 120/11 122/18 131/16 135/3 138/10 numbers [3] 61/3 91/6 97/19 141/17 142/5 142/19 143/12 144/5 144/6 newspaper [1] 28/9 next [17] 4/4 11/9 16/22 22/10 47/23 63/4 Nye [1] 24/17 ones [5] 35/12 36/1 69/5 103/3 146/16 66/15 99/12 101/21 101/24 126/20 144/6 Nye's [1] 131/9 only [27] 6/2 7/5 7/18 8/4 13/2 27/7 27/17 144/10 144/16 144/18 149/23 149/24 27/18 36/10 49/14 55/25 61/16 65/9 65/13 Nick [1] 131/9 73/4 73/23 86/12 88/22 93/23 95/13 99/23 night [1] 30/8 oath [3] 13/7 14/4 96/25 103/2 111/19 111/19 120/20 127/22 132/11 nine [3] 61/22 89/12 116/17 object [11] 35/15 42/4 43/16 54/25 59/19 onto [3] 131/22 144/11 147/5 78/21 79/14 93/24 94/14 143/11 144/24 Nixon [3] 1/20 153/6 153/8 open [1] 86/12 no [149] 1/3 3/25 4/14 10/6 11/22 12/5 opening [6] 3/5 11/7 15/17 16/3 16/17 objected [1] 9/1 19/7 19/22 22/8 22/8 23/5 23/7 26/13 26/13 objection [54] 12/19 12/22 40/8 40/11 145/15 43/1 43/5 43/11 43/23 43/24 50/17 50/21 operate [2] 30/3 32/10 26/17 28/21 28/23 29/1 29/2 29/5 29/6 29/7 29/16 31/11 33/16 34/20 35/16 37/1 38/12 51/1 51/24 55/25 57/12 57/14 58/21 59/9 operating [1] 104/23 38/12 43/16 45/12 46/25 47/6 48/16 50/23 60/2 65/14 65/14 65/15 71/20 74/4 74/8 opinion [12] 15/1 15/8 74/11 81/16 82/2 57/7 59/4 62/3 62/8 62/13 62/23 63/5 63/16 74/17 75/23 76/10 77/14 79/3 81/6 81/14 82/4 98/22 98/23 98/23 137/6 138/18 142/1 64/8 69/5 80/3 80/9 81/11 81/19 84/18 opinions [2] 15/9 140/22 81/19 85/9 85/21 86/24 87/4 92/4 92/12 85/15 91/15 91/25 93/4 93/7 93/11 93/20 94/3 94/8 107/3 107/7 120/23 122/8 122/17 opportunity [7] 10/6 13/20 15/19 16/17 96/19 97/7 97/11 97/12 98/5 98/8 99/2 122/24 133/10 136/21 137/15 138/13 140/2 19/25 35/19 130/3 141/15 143/11 99/10 99/19 99/21 101/20 101/23 102/23 opposing [1] 3/12 103/1 103/9 103/25 104/3 104/10 104/17 objection's [1] 122/10 opposite [1] 17/13 104/22 105/1 105/15 105/18 106/2 106/17 objectionable [1] 92/9 opposition [1] 2/20 107/22 108/25 108/25 109/24 111/7 112/22 objections [1] 12/9 options [1] 16/15 objects [1] 9/2 114/10 114/12 114/16 114/20 114/23 or [144] 2/20 3/23 4/12 4/16 4/16 4/20 4/21 114/25 115/7 118/12 118/24 119/8 120/8 obstructions [1] 29/16 4/22 5/2 5/4 5/11 11/18 11/18 11/20 11/22 120/15 121/12 121/14 121/25 121/25 123/7 obviously [4] 29/13 56/7 64/15 115/19 11/22 11/25 11/25 12/11 12/15 12/22 13/5 123/10 123/20 123/23 125/3 125/17 125/21 occasion [1] 115/23 13/15 13/19 13/20 13/22 13/22 13/23 14/5 129/10 130/13 130/16 130/16 130/19 occur [1] 93/10 14/5 14/15 14/15 14/17 14/19 14/22 14/23 occurred [3] 73/16 133/25 144/3 130/22 130/23 131/3 131/11 131/13 132/1 14/24 14/24 15/3 15/5 16/13 16/18 16/22 132/11 132/19 133/22 134/13 135/15 136/2 October [2] 114/6 114/10 16/22 19/3 19/6 19/6 20/2 20/9 20/12 20/13 136/13 136/18 136/19 138/17 138/18 140/1 off [21] 3/17 4/17 20/8 20/14 21/23 22/17 20/19 23/16 23/20 24/25 26/23 29/19 29/23 26/7 31/16 41/12 46/12 48/2 51/16 58/4 32/20 33/7 33/25 34/11 35/2 36/10 36/11 140/21 141/17 141/24 145/18 145/21 145/25 147/8 147/13 147/22 148/7 149/6 66/7 69/21 74/21 84/22 87/17 87/18 102/21 37/4 37/5 37/21 45/13 47/7 48/3 49/25 50/7 151/16 151/23 151/24 126/24 50/14 54/2 55/3 57/3 59/17 61/2 62/9 62/11 nobody [10] 28/7 30/19 31/8 33/9 33/21 off-site [1] 69/21 67/11 69/4 71/11 73/2 75/12 76/1 76/4 33/23 36/12 45/10 62/11 99/18 offer [5] 11/7 11/8 11/9 58/7 92/11 78/11 79/2 81/1 84/15 86/13 87/6 87/6 Nobody's [1] 24/21 office [2] 96/21 140/10 90/14 95/5 95/17 100/4 102/3 102/7 105/3 noise [1] 58/13 officers [1] 6/2 105/6 107/24 118/1 119/7 119/22 119/23

official [2] 4/22 4/22

often [2] 14/19 140/5

oh [8] 30/7 30/8 33/18 46/7 102/10 131/25

123/9 124/9 126/16 128/25 130/13 130/16

130/17 130/18 130/22 131/3 132/1 132/19

132/22 133/18 134/8 136/7 137/6 137/7

Case: 3:06-cv-02950-JZ Dotp#je?391 निक्रि: 11/24/08 166 of 105/2 109/39 09/9 109/42/52 parcels [2] 109/14 109/19 pardon [1] 125/11 pin [3] 35/8 90/20 90/21 or... [18] 138/17 139/5 139/8 140/11 pins [2] 35/17 35/24 pipe [34] 15/2 29/4 29/6 32/7 32/7 32/22 140/23 141/4 141/12 142/7 144/7 144/17 Parma [1] 83/18 144/22 145/18 145/23 147/1 147/13 150/1 part [17] 14/5 21/12 25/5 71/13 82/10 34/9 34/12 34/16 34/18 34/20 42/22 46/22 151/12 151/23 88/14 88/16 88/16 104/8 105/6 105/8 83/22 88/1 129/2 142/22 144/17 144/22 oral [1] 2/17 112/12 115/17 116/19 126/9 138/10 151/14 145/2 145/3 146/2 146/17 146/20 146/22 order [10] 2/12 2/16 2/21 2/23 5/8 5/12 partial [1] 116/22 146/23 147/6 147/13 148/25 149/17 149/20 5/14 9/12 10/8 12/7 participate [1] 10/22 149/25 150/18 150/18 original [1] 35/17 particular [5] 11/24 13/15 25/20 28/17 pipeline [1] 32/3 originally [1] 122/22 72/2 pipes [8] 46/21 83/21 84/8 145/8 148/2 149/16 149/18 149/19 originating [1] 108/21 particularly [1] 6/7 parties [1] 15/1 place [14] 21/25 22/10 22/21 23/7 24/1 other [38] 2/15 3/15 3/19 8/4 8/11 12/3 19/3 26/9 33/23 33/24 34/3 43/14 44/9 partner [4] 6/20 117/3 117/10 117/25 26/14 28/20 48/14 49/12 54/24 55/4 86/2 44/11 45/25 59/15 63/25 67/23 69/4 69/5 partners [4] 6/6 6/22 15/23 117/22 86/5 134/23 71/12 72/13 81/12 90/21 90/22 92/19 94/22 partnership [2] 6/6 126/10 places [1] 20/12 108/7 121/2 127/9 127/12 135/2 137/19 parts [1] 31/11 plaintiff [10] 1/5 7/23 8/1 10/5 11/9 37/8 party [9] 5/11 5/16 6/19 8/11 11/18 12/8 140/11 140/13 145/5 147/8 148/25 66/15 126/20 127/3 127/9 others [5] 11/25 14/15 65/17 76/9 76/19 31/20 59/20 59/23 plaintiff's [8] 2/20 5/5 8/23 9/4 15/5 16/3 passage [1] 14/18 passion [1] 11/18 30/23 143/17 otherwise [1] 5/2 our [36] 16/10 18/13 21/12 21/23 26/8 plaintiffs [2] 1/14 11/8 27/7 31/9 36/10 38/19 39/24 41/21 41/23 past [7] 80/16 80/17 93/17 134/3 149/17 plan [15] 25/5 73/2 105/10 105/12 105/16 46/20 46/21 71/13 71/17 73/11 73/19 77/21 149/18 149/21 105/20 106/6 124/9 125/9 125/13 125/22 82/18 88/20 89/20 93/17 101/14 105/6 path [6] 18/17 22/24 52/23 53/2 132/25 125/24 126/13 146/17 147/9 105/8 111/17 118/6 127/7 136/2 136/23 146/3 planning [2] 85/13 87/7 plans [18] 18/23 19/6 69/24 70/10 72/24 payers [1] 7/6 payment [1] 26/13 138/9 146/6 149/2 150/24 152/4 84/19 85/24 106/8 106/11 106/12 106/14 ours [1] 31/7 out [80] 4/5 8/2 8/3 8/7 11/24 12/24 18/11 payments [2] 93/3 93/6 106/18 134/19 146/10 146/12 146/22 21/6 21/9 23/14 23/22 25/1 26/10 26/25 PBS [1] 50/12 146/25 149/3 32/18 34/9 34/14 34/22 35/12 39/2 39/2 peddle [1] 109/20 planted [1] 19/19 45/16 49/16 50/2 50/19 64/5 64/6 67/2 67/6 pending [2] 3/3 128/15 plat [1] 21/16 people [17] 7/11 8/9 14/17 16/25 34/15 69/9 69/25 70/10 73/15 74/13 75/16 75/18 play [1] 42/15 75/19 75/21 76/25 78/8 78/13 84/12 85/24 36/9 36/14 47/25 52/18 53/1 63/6 63/17 played [1] 15/3 86/3 87/22 93/12 98/18 109/16 110/8 65/10 81/12 82/13 127/12 139/24 please [17] 43/2 46/1 54/7 55/4 56/16 71/4 82/23 84/21 94/19 100/18 108/11 120/25 113/10 113/12 117/9 121/12 124/2 127/22 per [3] 88/8 88/9 91/11 128/10 128/16 132/2 132/24 133/23 134/9 per-lot [1] 91/11 136/9 137/18 137/20 149/10 152/9 percent [5] 26/21 69/2 117/17 118/2 118/8 136/24 137/5 138/11 139/17 139/18 140/5 plowing [1] 9/25 plumber [2] 83/16 83/19 140/23 143/5 143/8 144/14 144/17 144/19 percentage [1] 68/25 Percolate [1] 121/21 144/21 144/22 144/23 145/1 145/3 146/10 plumbers [1] 83/16 perfectly [1] 29/16 plumbing [2] 68/11 68/12 148/8 perform [1] 5/24 outlet [1] 42/19 plush [3] 49/12 49/20 49/20 outline [1] 2/5 perhaps [1] 140/25 point [10] 8/13 11/25 41/24 41/24 43/20 61/12 93/17 96/6 127/9 148/10 outside [10] 4/19 5/10 18/1 26/8 63/23 perimeter [1] 89/2 74/9 115/13 136/16 137/5 139/23 pointed [3] 23/22 34/9 53/11 perk [2] 121/19 121/20 permission [4] 34/19 34/20 34/25 35/4 Perrysburg [8] 18/5 18/5 67/20 72/5 95/9 over [34] 10/20 17/6 20/10 20/25 21/23 pointing [1] 62/7 points [1] 18/19 pond [19] 25/6 34/22 40/9 41/1 44/24 23/12 35/7 35/8 41/9 41/11 41/12 42/3 95/10 95/12 102/3 47/12 48/23 51/11 53/8 53/16 53/23 55/14 55/15 58/6 70/13 70/15 72/12 79/10 88/14 person [9] 6/8 6/9 14/25 56/21 98/2 44/25 45/3 45/5 47/11 84/1 84/3 84/10 86/11 86/14 86/22 87/3 87/11 87/21 88/22 88/15 104/18 108/7 110/16 119/10 124/12 109/11 109/11 120/20 135/4 137/19 143/2 person's [1] 56/22 ponding [12] 33/1 33/16 33/16 73/18 overhead [1] 16/23 overlay [1] 21/15 personally [7] 49/15 60/13 93/23 94/2 74/14 75/1 80/4 119/6 119/22 120/18 133/22 145/19 145/25 120/21 121/3 overrule [5] 58/23 60/2 92/12 107/7 142/2 persons [1] 14/19 ponds [3] 84/6 86/17 87/7 overruled [7] 40/12 74/18 75/24 133/11 Peterman [12] 25/12 36/6 69/25 70/7 73/3 pool [1] 58/1 136/22 140/3 141/16 90/8 105/3 125/23 131/10 136/17 136/20 poor [1] 46/24 141/3 oversee [1] 70/3 porch [1] 54/2 own [11] 11/7 17/19 25/3 25/23 26/9 27/10 33/10 62/21 62/24 65/19 73/24 phone [1] 129/23 Port [1] 67/22 portable [2] 16/14 16/16 phones [1] 27/21 owned [5] 17/18 19/15 43/22 63/20 78/1 photo [2] 54/7 55/18 portion [1] 4/10 owner [12] 58/18 59/21 81/16 81/22 81/25 photograph [13] 39/8 39/11 39/20 39/23 portions [1] 7/19 52/14 53/25 54/4 55/4 57/3 57/5 57/16 83/8 92/10 107/17 108/23 109/2 109/4 position [1] 36/15 140/22 89/18 95/18 positions [1] 15/21 owners [16] 2/15 3/22 5/21 5/23 6/1 19/8 photographs [4] 24/5 38/24 56/3 56/22 possible [2] 129/2 140/15 21/2 22/9 23/17 26/3 26/9 41/19 59/16 62/5 phrase [1] 134/15 possibly [1] 144/18 physical [2] 130/10 130/16 128/19 139/13 preconstruction [1] 29/20 ownership [1] 68/25 Physically [2] 129/15 130/23 prejudice [1] 11/18 owns [2] 17/18 34/3 pick [2] 8/9 64/6 prejudicial [2] 5/22 7/2 preliminary [2] 10/19 15/16 picked [1] 64/5 picture [16] 38/9 38/13 38/15 40/16 52/6 premium [1] 88/10 prepared [4] 125/24 126/1 126/4 131/14 p.m [1] 152/8 56/1 61/23 100/4 100/6 100/12 100/24 preparing [1] 9/18 present [5] 2/2 10/25 11/10 15/25 25/24 101/13 101/17 101/18 101/19 104/11 pacify [1] 129/24 pad [1] 9/22 pictures [3] 20/8 21/10 38/4 page [5] 91/9 97/19 97/20 97/24 117/13 piece [16] 67/20 67/21 67/23 68/2 69/13 preserve [5] 4/4 4/9 17/11 19/18 101/22 paid [3] 46/8 70/14 138/2 73/4 73/11 74/24 74/25 87/9 95/13 101/25 pretrial [1] 7/25

Case: 3:06-cv-02950-JZ Dogottii [4]39137112ed: 11/24/08 167 og real [2] 2694396519.2#: 2953 pulled [3] 21/6 54/22 113/10 really [8] 24/18 36/8 47/6 118/7 123/5 pretty [4] 61/3 78/11 79/20 136/3 pump [1] 148/8 133/12 137/23 140/23 preview [1] 16/18 purchase [2] 71/19 114/13 realtors [1] 65/10 previously [2] 9/9 131/19 pure [1] 5/1 rear [7] 4/1 40/2 76/8 89/11 94/22 123/21 purpose [5] 12/25 25/24 73/2 73/10 price [4] 26/23 91/11 91/15 139/10 131/22 principal [2] 11/22 92/16 138/19 reason [9] 12/22 20/25 65/20 97/8 105/1 prior [16] 17/3 55/23 85/19 85/20 89/16 purposes [1] 8/15 106/8 111/5 112/20 112/22 89/23 93/9 105/4 105/8 113/25 114/9 reasonable [3] 31/5 64/23 88/23 pursuant [1] 10/8 114/13 117/18 119/23 144/25 145/15 push [2] 35/5 74/22 reasonableness [1] 13/20 pristine [1] 49/11 pushed [1] 35/9 reasoning [1] 27/14 private [3] 72/9 83/7 101/25 put [40] 4/5 9/2 9/14 17/1 23/5 24/24 31/3 reasons [7] 2/23 17/25 92/13 92/14 92/16 privilege [1] 28/3 34/7 34/15 34/18 35/17 37/19 41/1 44/6 94/2 143/12 probably [8] 25/6 38/10 40/21 51/23 54/2 61/11 63/10 101/14 44/24 44/25 45/3 50/5 52/6 55/22 58/1 rebuttal [1] 11/10 70/10 75/9 76/23 86/13 86/15 88/23 90/14 recall [6] 21/20 95/19 96/20 96/23 97/9 problem [37] 23/25 24/23 25/9 32/25 33/2 98/25 103/3 103/9 105/3 111/16 117/18 134/7 33/5 33/8 34/5 69/20 69/20 80/4 81/1 81/5 120/14 124/24 138/2 138/5 138/8 138/15 receive [5] 2/19 3/23 9/13 9/16 58/18 81/10 81/18 81/24 82/3 83/13 84/15 84/15 puts [2] 34/21 82/22 received [5] 9/16 9/17 58/24 58/25 83/15 84/17 109/22 111/21 112/3 113/22 114/1 putting [5] 24/7 53/21 87/25 109/19 137/4 recently [1] 34/14 120/6 120/18 120/21 121/3 128/19 128/21 recess [2] 82/25 152/9 128/22 131/1 140/23 140/25 141/4 recognize [2] 38/13 57/5 problems [6] 59/15 114/2 129/5 129/8 qualifications [1] 15/15 recollect [1] 14/17 130/11 130/18 qualified [2] 14/25 84/20 recommend [3] 59/17 141/19 141/22 procedure [2] 11/6 97/14 quantify [1] 33/9 reconstruction [1] 16/7 question [67] 12/19 12/20 12/23 12/25 record [14] 2/1 2/7 3/18 4/17 7/21 8/15 proceedings [3] 1/23 7/2 153/4 process [2] 36/22 82/10 produce [1] 123/18 13/1 22/1 28/21 28/23 29/1 29/2 29/5 29/6 9/10 9/11 31/17 48/2 51/17 84/23 126/25 42/5 43/6 43/7 43/12 46/25 51/1 52/21 53/7 153/4 produced [1] 1/24 58/15 64/17 71/21 74/5 77/15 79/15 82/16 recorded [1] 1/23 professional [1] 21/22 records [1] 4/21 84/14 84/24 85/2 85/11 85/21 87/1 87/2 proffer [1] 3/20 87/5 87/10 88/13 92/5 94/19 97/9 98/1 99/9 recreational [1] 45/4 profit [5] 18/4 18/8 91/14 91/19 138/6 104/13 105/25 106/11 108/10 108/13 RECROSS [2] 66/3 125/6 prohibits [1] 3/19 115/25 117/18 117/21 120/25 122/13 redig [1] 143/3 project [25] 18/9 18/11 28/9 33/1 33/20 125/12 129/18 129/21 130/9 132/1 132/4 redirect [5] 47/19 65/2 65/4 121/7 121/9 134/22 135/11 137/8 138/12 141/22 143/20 referring [1] 100/19 34/2 45/7 45/17 46/15 47/9 59/1 80/24 reflect [2] 2/1 9/11 98/25 99/24 108/3 108/21 135/23 137/4 143/24 144/25 144/25 137/9 137/10 137/11 137/12 137/23 139/6 questionable [1] 26/25 refunded [1] 114/19 regard [5] 12/16 51/4 77/25 83/13 84/14 questioned [1] 8/7 150/10 regardless [1] 14/11 regards [1] 58/25 projection [1] 91/10 questions [7] 3/14 11/14 13/9 13/16 96/15 projects [2] 140/11 140/12 123/4 125/3 promptly [1] 152/8 quite [3] 70/8 98/14 151/7 regular [1] 30/13 proper [2] 14/2 82/16 quote [1] 6/20 relation [1] 12/3 properties [3] 47/8 106/22 139/14 relationship [1] 90/11 R property [143] 2/15 3/22 4/1 4/20 4/24 relative [2] 12/6 15/14 relevancy [2] 143/18 143/19 relied [2] 126/12 126/13 4/25 15/5 18/2 18/24 19/6 19/8 19/11 20/24 rail [1] 29/8 21/1 21/23 21/25 22/2 22/10 22/18 23/17 railroad [88] 17/2 17/14 17/18 21/21 21/22 22/10 22/16 22/18 23/9 23/14 23/19 23/24 relocate [1] 146/23 remain [3] 5/10 5/15 8/3 24/11 24/16 24/18 25/13 25/17 25/23 26/3 26/8 26/8 28/21 29/11 32/13 34/11 34/17 23/25 24/8 24/21 25/18 28/13 29/8 30/17 35/3 35/4 36/8 36/13 36/20 38/19 39/13 30/20 31/5 31/8 31/9 33/22 34/5 34/16 35/3 remark [1] 137/17 35/4 37/19 37/19 39/3 39/4 39/19 40/1 40/4 remember [18] 12/9 35/6 36/21 38/5 40/20 39/16 39/18 39/19 39/25 40/25 41/19 42/16 43/15 43/22 44/10 44/10 44/12 45/1 45/6 41/6 42/10 42/16 43/15 44/12 45/16 45/20 52/17 68/13 80/2 82/23 84/25 99/24 100/5 45/11 46/4 49/9 50/23 55/23 58/18 59/16 45/24 49/9 50/15 52/15 54/1 55/23 56/2 100/24 117/22 118/10 118/13 128/25 152/9 59/21 62/2 62/11 62/12 67/20 67/21 67/24 58/20 59/17 63/24 64/2 64/7 71/13 73/8 remind [1] 15/18 73/18 75/3 75/5 76/4 77/11 77/19 78/5 67/25 71/11 71/12 71/13 71/13 71/17 71/19 removal [3] 65/7 65/23 65/24 73/4 74/24 74/25 76/22 77/21 78/3 78/10 78/18 78/18 92/19 104/9 104/16 104/16 removed [12] 15/5 29/5 29/11 36/13 36/17 78/15 79/6 79/9 79/18 81/16 81/22 81/25 104/21 104/24 105/14 106/2 106/16 109/2 52/24 62/6 62/10 62/18 62/22 66/9 106/2 removes [1] 104/2 132/25 134/4 138/2 142/19 145/24 146/3 87/9 88/12 89/2 89/19 89/20 90/5 90/11 renew [1] 85/10 repeat [4] 20/3 46/1 52/21 56/19 90/14 90/19 90/20 90/21 92/3 92/10 92/11 146/16 146/18 147/3 147/5 147/7 150/23 92/18 93/13 93/22 94/7 94/8 95/13 96/3 150/25 100/8 101/14 102/22 104/1 104/3 104/9 railroad's [3] 21/8 34/19 48/20 repeated [1] 11/22 railway [6] 28/24 28/24 29/3 29/4 32/15 repeatedly [1] 30/8 104/21 104/25 105/22 109/1 109/5 109/6 109/12 119/24 124/14 131/5 131/6 131/24 32/15 rephrase [18] 42/5 43/12 50/25 51/2 59/12 rain [5] 24/2 33/12 33/13 47/16 76/20 132/9 133/17 134/5 134/17 135/6 135/10 71/21 74/5 76/14 77/15 79/15 80/11 92/5 139/13 140/16 140/22 143/17 145/6 146/3 raised [4] 2/17 2/24 87/4 122/9 94/10 120/24 122/13 130/9 143/13 143/24 report [2] 128/4 128/8 reporter [3] 1/20 16/11 108/9 147/5 151/1 ran [8] 22/23 41/23 41/24 42/1 42/22 46/22 proposed [4] 8/24 9/12 9/19 9/19 67/22 124/9 prove [2] 14/13 37/2 range [1] 88/5 represent [5] 28/3 39/1 39/23 44/22 60/23 proved [2] 12/17 85/9 rare [1] 31/2 representation [2] 3/10 35/22 rate [2] 18/7 84/7 representations [1] 2/11 proves [1] 82/15 provide [1] 97/18 rather [6] 12/1 14/9 15/18 18/25 24/7 representative [14] 5/18 6/2 6/13 7/5 8/1 provided [1] 2/19 33/11 8/11 8/14 27/17 27/19 32/1 56/7 100/4 provision [1] 106/1 ravine [1] 88/19 127/4 127/5 public [3] 3/24 28/10 58/19 Ray [2] 145/22 146/8 representatives [3] 5/12 5/17 7/8 represented [1] 125/18 publicized [3] 139/20 139/20 139/22 read [5] 10/20 13/5 85/2 131/9 132/5 published [1] 28/9 ready [3] 10/12 15/17 16/3 represents [2] 38/16 39/10

search [1] a@6| D #: 2954 Case: 3:06-cv-02950-JZ Dot #2/239 Filed: 11/24/08 168 of role [1] 15/2 seat [5] 41/11 43/2 52/4 83/10 127/12 request [2] 9/3 10/9 roles [2] 6/12 12/9 seated [1] 10/14 rolls [1] 43/20 requests [1] 9/4 second [3] 48/17 114/18 126/21 require [1] 145/12 room [2] 30/25 142/25 Secondly [1] 21/24 required [11] 4/16 9/12 14/3 21/4 25/5 section [4] 43/22 137/24 137/25 138/1 roots [1] 21/8 Rossford [8] 18/5 95/11 95/13 110/4 28/8 28/11 105/13 125/10 125/14 126/2 sections [1] 140/13 requires [1] 124/9 138/23 139/1 139/6 139/7 see [79] 12/11 13/21 14/19 16/10 17/11 research [1] 97/4 18/16 20/4 20/8 20/12 20/13 21/7 21/10 Rossford's [1] 139/4 residence [2] 101/25 102/2 roughly [1] 108/20 22/12 24/16 29/2 29/8 29/14 29/15 29/20 residences [2] 102/3 138/22 route [1] 89/1 29/21 29/24 30/9 40/6 41/11 42/18 43/5 row [5] 17/12 17/12 39/17 39/17 71/16 residential [1] 134/23 49/17 49/23 50/3 51/8 51/20 52/18 53/1 residents [2] 18/8 138/20 respect [10] 2/9 2/15 2/18 4/14 4/18 4/23 rows [1] 17/12 53/7 53/11 53/14 59/7 59/17 60/5 61/23 RPR [2] 1/20 153/8 62/7 62/15 64/10 64/13 70/22 74/10 74/16 6/14 9/23 31/19 82/2 rule [1] 82/8 75/21 76/4 76/5 79/17 79/20 79/23 84/21 ruled [1] 8/14 respective [2] 3/11 15/20 88/15 90/1 92/25 95/14 95/25 97/24 98/2 response [1] 2/20 rules [5] 10/23 11/1 11/1 82/23 152/9 101/12 115/16 115/23 116/13 116/19 responsible [1] 83/25 ruling [6] 2/8 2/14 2/16 3/2 3/19 16/2 116/25 117/14 117/16 117/17 133/2 134/3 run [7] 22/19 25/3 88/6 88/6 149/6 149/19 responsive [2] 130/4 130/5 143/10 144/17 144/22 145/2 147/11 147/20 rest [2] 106/21 140/9 151/8 restitution [1] 60/5 running [2] 10/18 87/25 seem [1] 32/6 restoring [1] 25/16 runs [4] 22/19 38/20 39/18 149/15 seems [5] 4/17 5/25 7/22 7/25 59/11 seen [9] 6/15 20/11 29/21 34/8 96/1 98/18 result [2] 144/19 144/23 S resume [1] 152/8 131/14 131/19 134/7 s: [1] 153/6 resurvey [1] 35/14 segment [2] 137/10 137/11 Seibenick [1] 3/18 retain [1] 84/6 s:/Angela [1] 153/6 retainage [1] 84/3 sac [6] 48/17 55/7 55/11 55/14 55/15 select [1] 95/2 selected [1] 64/1 retained [2] 56/6 126/7 103/8 retention [14] 25/6 45/3 83/25 84/6 84/10 said [27] 9/21 23/19 30/4 30/5 33/6 36/25 selection [1] 36/22 sell [16] 18/7 26/5 33/19 33/19 34/4 66/11 86/11 86/14 86/16 86/22 87/3 87/7 87/11 37/11 48/7 64/25 66/17 95/7 98/7 105/22 106/9 106/13 106/15 106/18 107/7 111/24 98/24 99/8 107/23 110/19 112/21 118/17 87/21 88/22 retire [1] 11/12 review [2] 10/2 96/17 114/4 117/3 119/12 122/22 125/8 129/1 118/18 118/20 138/6 138/16 130/25 145/5 selling [11] 18/5 26/22 28/16 97/6 98/2 sale [3] 45/1 92/1 112/15 98/8 98/21 107/12 107/13 111/13 123/5 reviewed [1] 2/10 Ric [5] 18/14 20/17 32/1 52/14 135/24 saleable [1] 24/20 sells [1] 139/9 rid [3] 21/4 33/21 102/17 sales [17] 26/18 49/2 61/16 91/15 91/25 send [3] 139/12 139/16 139/18 Ridge [11] 106/24 107/1 107/5 107/9 92/1 92/2 92/8 92/17 93/7 95/5 95/16 sense [1] 109/9 108/20 111/9 112/3 118/18 121/11 122/16 107/11 115/10 118/25 123/9 123/14 sentence [1] 11/24 same [13] 13/9 14/19 30/4 30/5 31/3 34/2 separated [1] 6/16 Ridgewater [1] 113/8 36/7 41/3 76/7 81/19 97/20 117/13 141/20 separately [1] 9/5 right [95] 8/18 17/10 17/18 18/17 19/15 sanitary [4] 44/6 69/18 69/19 103/4 separates [1] 39/18 21/7 21/17 21/20 22/17 22/23 23/6 23/7 satisfied [1] 37/1 separation [2] 5/6 5/9 septic [8] 41/21 41/23 42/1 43/9 46/10 Saturday [1] 76/25 24/13 24/20 26/5 28/13 29/4 29/7 29/9 29/21 32/5 32/24 34/2 35/1 36/13 36/19 46/21 121/18 121/21 save [1] 46/20 saw [32] 16/19 19/5 23/22 28/25 29/9 36/22 38/18 38/20 39/25 40/9 42/24 45/17 serene [1] 49/11 46/5 46/8 46/12 48/4 50/15 51/23 53/8 30/12 32/5 32/16 34/9 34/22 35/6 35/6 series [1] 38/24 35/11 42/22 49/20 50/15 50/22 51/6 52/10 serve [2] 138/19 138/21 58/20 60/4 61/19 61/21 61/25 63/24 69/15 75/3 77/6 78/3 78/12 78/20 81/23 82/1 68/2 69/11 74/23 75/22 77/2 93/16 100/10 served [1] 147/13 88/19 88/20 88/20 88/21 88/25 89/8 89/9 116/4 133/14 134/7 134/8 141/20 145/3 serves [1] 138/20 90/4 96/24 97/16 99/4 102/20 103/11 saws [1] 20/18 service [2] 17/22 44/10 103/14 105/5 105/16 106/15 106/19 106/19 say [41] 5/16 18/20 23/2 23/3 28/7 31/4 services [2] 128/3 128/5 107/11 108/16 108/17 109/14 113/24 115/8 32/3 32/10 33/7 33/11 35/24 36/16 43/19 servicing [1] 119/2 116/21 125/15 125/23 126/5 126/15 133/18 50/24 66/5 71/11 78/2 85/23 88/2 88/19 set [3] 2/23 77/2 146/10 134/4 134/15 134/18 134/20 134/20 134/24 89/11 98/8 101/11 102/14 102/24 103/16 settled [1] 31/12 135/25 142/25 145/16 145/24 105/1 109/10 111/2 111/7 119/16 119/18 several [7] 6/23 20/10 36/5 73/15 122/4 119/20 122/3 122/25 123/13 126/18 135/22 131/22 143/4 ripped [1] 21/9 river [15] 16/24 16/24 17/6 23/15 25/7 28/14 67/21 67/24 72/13 86/3 87/22 88/20 severed [3] 24/1 146/23 148/25 severely [1] 57/23 135/24 137/3 148/23 saying [20] 61/24 61/25 78/4 93/24 99/24 100/13 102/11 103/7 103/12 103/14 103/20 sewage [1] 46/10 88/21 138/10 138/11 rivers [2] 84/7 84/9 sewer [10] 83/17 89/7 89/7 89/7 111/11 104/14 116/22 132/15 141/3 141/4 149/6 road [45] 4/6 16/24 17/5 17/6 17/6 17/7 149/8 149/9 149/15 111/12 111/16 111/17 124/10 145/14 sewers [4] 44/6 69/18 103/4 103/4 19/4 20/4 20/12 23/12 25/4 25/7 30/9 30/11 says [15] 27/5 27/8 30/5 30/7 38/8 51/8 37/18 37/25 39/3 39/12 41/7 41/11 41/12 102/13 105/16 114/10 120/12 120/21 121/2 share [1] 9/20 41/20 44/7 44/9 64/20 70/4 72/13 75/10 123/17 123/19 132/17 she [10] 4/12 13/20 13/22 45/3 64/6 64/8 68/1 133/11 143/20 143/21 75/11 86/1 86/2 86/4 86/5 87/21 87/22 scale [1] 22/14 88/21 89/6 89/12 93/14 93/14 103/3 143/5 scalped [1] 94/9 she's [1] 130/4 144/3 144/4 145/4 scalping [6] 92/18 93/22 93/25 94/6 94/13 short [1] 60/3 Robert [1] 1/17 94/23 shortly [1] 23/12 Robon [6] 1/14 1/14 6/15 15/22 100/5 scenario [1] 36/10 should [12] 2/1 10/3 14/7 14/10 14/16 118/13 Schoen [7] 113/7 113/8 115/2 115/3 115/4 14/21 15/13 15/14 53/10 71/18 135/19 141/21 146/10 Robon's [1] 96/21 146/15 school [5] 67/3 68/7 127/22 142/14 142/15 show [38] 17/17 18/4 18/13 18/16 18/22 Rock [1] 121/23 Rocky [11] 106/24 107/1 107/5 107/9 science [2] 30/24 34/23 18/22 19/2 20/15 21/2 21/17 21/22 21/24 108/20 111/9 112/3 118/18 121/11 122/16 screen [3] 20/11 53/10 55/22 22/17 22/20 24/4 24/19 24/24 25/10 26/12

so-called [1] 32/23 state [1] 11/4 show... [19] 41/10 53/12 70/16 74/22 soil [1] 121/17 stated [2] 2/23 11/22 sold [21] 17/20 26/7 26/9 33/23 63/11 88/14 114/5 124/11 124/12 131/21 132/7 statement [5] 8/19 16/17 92/22 118/10 132/12 133/15 136/19 146/17 146/20 65/20 67/21 69/9 91/11 92/12 99/10 107/14 137/8 statements [4] 11/7 12/12 15/17 15/18 146/25 147/1 147/10 152/8 107/17 107/22 109/12 109/21 110/6 110/7 show-stopper [1] 114/5 showed [4] 100/4 101/13 131/15 133/17 110/8 113/25 123/6 STATES [3] 1/1 1/11 25/22 station [2] 18/18 18/18 status [1] 25/15 sole [1] 13/12 showing [2] 100/5 131/24 solely [1] 12/11 shown [5] 4/21 5/3 13/6 42/9 86/12 solid [1] 143/5 Stawinski [3] 48/13 56/24 60/21 shows [12] 17/4 17/9 17/10 22/14 22/14 solve [3] 25/8 80/4 81/10 stay [6] 31/6 51/8 79/2 134/16 135/12 50/12 72/19 83/6 91/2 104/11 132/11 135/14 solving [1] 81/1 some [32] 4/22 9/9 9/9 10/16 10/19 12/4 12/5 19/3 23/1 23/22 25/17 29/1 32/6 32/16 stayed [3] 18/24 21/1 79/5 side [24] 3/16 5/17 10/11 14/9 14/11 17/13 staying [1] 108/24 20/10 23/6 31/8 31/9 31/16 33/24 33/24 33/11 35/6 35/11 37/19 38/4 46/13 60/9 stenography [1] 1/23 step [3] 47/21 66/14 126/19 70/16 76/19 82/3 101/10 114/1 114/2 118/1 34/17 45/24 45/25 51/16 53/8 53/23 72/13 78/14 84/22 126/24 145/4 124/6 136/25 136/25 144/17 stepped [1] 144/10 side-bar [3] 31/16 51/16 84/22 somebody [5] 43/25 99/11 104/2 123/1 stick [2] 147/20 147/22 sides [1] 95/11 135/6 still [24] 10/17 17/18 26/24 29/18 45/22 sign [1] 51/8 someone [6] 4/19 4/23 109/2 109/7 55/10 55/11 62/15 71/15 73/19 81/11 84/18 signed [2] 7/1 113/3 135/10 137/7 101/3 101/10 101/15 102/5 103/1 103/4 significance [2] 12/6 41/18 someplace [2] 22/19 74/1 103/8 110/17 112/13 112/18 116/19 124/8 something [13] 9/25 20/13 31/23 50/13 significant [1] 33/16 stipulation [1] 12/15 signing [1] 7/3 60/9 60/11 68/20 98/16 99/22 102/11 115/2 stock [1] 114/1 signs [1] 112/15 118/2 150/23 stone [1] 72/17 sim [1] 50/18 similar [2] 27/3 57/10 stood [1] 55/6 stop [2] 129/20 137/18 sometime [1] 144/7 sometimes [3] 31/2 69/17 69/19 simply [2] 13/14 14/4 somewhere [3] 47/3 54/3 100/21 stopped [1] 110/14 since [20] 5/13 8/2 12/10 26/12 43/4 47/8 son [3] 49/4 50/10 67/4 stopper [1] 114/5 57/15 63/7 73/15 88/12 97/4 98/11 98/15 Soncrant [5] 19/3 127/2 127/17 144/2 stores [1] 84/10 storm [13] 25/7 69/16 69/19 69/21 85/4 98/19 99/11 107/6 114/22 118/16 127/22 151/17 85/12 87/22 88/20 89/7 89/7 90/14 103/3 soon [1] 3/8 single [7] 11/24 20/20 62/5 72/6 72/15 sorry [16] 16/9 27/11 41/22 62/9 72/20 124/10 72/21 88/24 101/9 104/18 108/16 108/25 107/14 109/20 story [1] 34/13 straight [1] 54/15 single-family [2] 72/6 72/15 122/25 130/7 149/16 149/18 150/24 sir [16] 45/6 47/18 60/25 66/11 88/9 97/8 sort [1] 60/9 street [8] 6/23 25/1 48/19 72/12 103/3 97/24 103/14 110/9 111/5 114/15 115/8 sounds [1] 96/24 103/10 116/9 124/22 115/11 116/21 117/3 119/6 south [2] 41/7 139/3 strike [2] 12/24 31/21 sit [4] 5/23 6/7 7/6 27/16 space [7] 25/4 32/4 32/6 32/9 32/12 86/13 strip [2] 20/9 67/6 site [21] 69/21 69/22 70/12 73/14 74/21 struggling [1] 143/22 86/13 study [2] 14/23 150/1 84/6 87/17 88/2 103/4 128/11 128/16 spaced [1] 124/6 129/16 129/22 132/24 133/19 140/5 142/12 spaces [1] 67/6 stuff [6] 30/14 46/3 50/11 50/12 147/7 speak [7] 16/12 16/13 66/25 67/12 70/20 150/24 144/3 144/11 146/7 146/9 sits [2] 24/1 29/4 stumps [3] 21/4 95/18 95/25 126/2 126/15 speaking [3] 34/25 131/16 146/9 sitting [2] 5/20 6/22 subcontractor [1] 20/16 situation [3] 24/20 87/17 91/23 spec [7] 21/18 26/11 29/25 63/20 63/25 subcontractors [1] 37/5 subdivision [78] 4/10 4/11 16/19 17/1 six [4] 24/25 26/7 49/6 50/10 75/12 124/3 special [1] 19/5 17/10 18/20 18/23 19/5 19/12 20/21 22/14 six-year-old [1] 50/10 specifically [1] 73/4 size [1] 84/8 23/10 25/5 26/6 37/22 38/21 48/14 49/8 sizing [1] 83/22 skill [1] 14/24 49/14 50/16 51/5 54/23 55/2 55/7 57/19 speculate [1] 12/21 speculation [1] 5/1 58/19 59/8 59/16 60/13 63/12 67/24 69/3 70/17 72/2 72/18 72/24 73/5 73/6 73/17 Skow [1] 6/23 speed [2] 30/15 30/16 slow [1] 30/14 spend [1] 137/5 73/24 75/3 75/10 83/5 83/6 84/16 86/3 slowly [1] 84/12 Spielbusch [1] 1/20 86/12 86/23 87/4 87/12 88/15 88/17 90/21 small [1] 22/14 spinning [2] 20/19 120/21 90/24 93/17 93/23 94/22 95/6 95/9 95/9 spoiled [1] 87/18 snapshot [1] 16/18 96/2 121/12 122/21 124/7 128/11 128/20 snow [1] 47/14 spoke [2] 9/9 129/23 128/25 130/17 132/10 133/3 133/14 133/19 so [115] 3/8 6/6 9/5 10/22 16/1 17/21 18/8 spot [5] 31/3 36/7 86/12 88/23 151/25 134/10 134/24 134/25 135/5 144/4 144/11 19/19 20/7 20/25 22/10 22/16 22/25 23/5 spring [7] 1/18 118/21 119/23 129/4 subdivisions [1] 69/4 23/6 23/8 24/1 24/12 24/15 25/1 25/17 26/9 130/12 144/7 144/8 subject [1] 8/17 26/10 27/9 27/17 28/15 29/13 30/4 32/14 stab [2] 151/17 151/19 submit [1] 8/23 32/17 32/19 32/23 33/15 34/21 36/7 37/21 stack [1] 32/7 submitted [1] 11/15 38/21 39/4 39/15 40/3 41/4 42/1 44/1 46/15 staked [1] 105/2 subsequent [1] 4/2 stakes [3] 35/11 35/12 35/25 47/2 47/14 52/19 54/15 56/7 58/1 58/8 subsequently [1] 58/5 58/17 59/4 61/2 61/21 62/24 67/11 68/2 stand [7] 13/11 13/19 47/25 48/3 85/20 substantial [2] 4/3 4/5 73/12 82/5 84/4 84/8 84/10 85/20 88/15 110/17 127/11 substantially [1] 21/13 89/1 94/2 97/19 100/5 101/6 102/21 106/15 standard [1] 97/14 successful [1] 69/8 standing [12] 10/8 54/2 60/4 75/10 76/18 109/14 109/18 110/16 111/13 111/23 Succinctly [1] 2/23 111/24 112/2 118/4 118/7 118/24 119/2 115/13 116/10 116/12 119/15 119/18 such [9] 12/14 12/16 12/24 13/9 14/2 123/11 126/3 127/8 127/12 128/3 128/14 119/25 120/13 14/21 15/11 56/23 116/12 131/7 131/8 132/13 134/16 136/19 136/25 stands [1] 123/1 sudden [1] 24/9 138/11 138/15 141/2 141/6 142/16 142/25 Stanley's [1] 69/6 suddenly [1] 62/1 143/1 143/1 144/19 145/5 147/17 148/5 start [2] 25/2 104/18 sue [1] 149/7 148/7 148/8 148/11 150/18 150/24 151/11 started [6] 19/16 23/21 33/1 45/17 49/8 sued [1] 6/21

Case: 3:06-cv-02950-JZ Doutal: [437)6 Filed: 11/24/08 170 o 64/24-64/28902/4 171/6 441/21 111/22 taxes [1] 26/17 114/6 114/14 114/18 114/19 120/14 130/4 sufficient [2] 14/13 37/2 Taylor [12] 6/9 7/14 7/15 8/2 8/16 15/22 131/5 131/6 139/14 140/19 140/22 143/2 27/15 27/16 66/23 71/3 96/12 125/8 suggest [2] 85/6 134/14 147/5 suggested [1] 135/4 technically [2] 36/1 128/1 them [46] 3/6 6/25 7/1 8/8 9/5 12/25 14/17 technician [1] 146/7 Suite [1] 1/15 20/8 21/4 21/9 26/24 29/9 30/8 32/3 32/10 32/19 32/19 49/13 56/22 64/13 64/15 64/17 tell [57] 4/12 6/21 15/19 27/10 30/4 30/23 summarizes [1] 3/2 summer [7] 22/23 23/5 33/13 54/8 129/4 31/10 31/10 31/12 32/25 33/3 35/19 37/15 66/22 70/13 78/1 84/20 85/13 85/14 85/14 130/12 140/6 38/15 39/7 40/15 41/18 44/3 48/11 50/6 86/18 106/9 106/9 110/7 111/7 111/8 Sumner [3] 37/17 44/20 47/22 57/18 66/22 67/13 67/15 67/18 69/10 72/1 113/10 114/13 114/21 118/7 120/10 120/11 Sunday [2] 9/16 9/17 72/11 73/1 75/12 75/17 76/16 77/19 77/24 126/7 134/16 135/9 144/17 149/7 superiors [5] 140/17 141/19 141/20 78/17 79/5 83/4 84/16 86/9 91/23 92/7 93/5 then [56] 11/8 11/9 12/16 12/20 12/23 141/23 142/2 93/21 94/5 119/14 121/15 122/15 123/8 17/12 21/20 22/16 22/19 23/13 23/14 24/14 supervised [2] 75/13 143/21 127/19 128/18 129/11 130/13 135/12 25/6 28/14 32/18 35/5 36/18 39/20 42/2 42/2 43/19 61/5 66/11 68/15 68/23 70/9 supplementing [1] 2/16 135/14 137/22 145/13 146/1 telling [4] 97/2 103/17 134/16 143/9 supplies [1] 13/2 70/10 70/11 77/8 78/10 84/12 87/10 87/24 support [1] 15/20 tells [1] 136/20 89/3 91/9 93/15 98/7 98/11 98/19 101/6 supposed [2] 23/3 113/16 ten [6] 61/22 82/21 82/21 110/8 129/4 102/1 104/2 106/2 106/9 109/12 109/16 supposedly [1] 33/9 152/8 111/5 111/19 118/6 122/6 128/1 129/11 sure [15] 4/12 5/14 30/6 30/12 54/17 59/10 tenant [1] 67/6 131/25 143/2 143/19 146/7 66/2 70/13 94/1 105/23 121/8 126/23 tendency [1] 108/17 there [179] 128/17 141/5 146/15 term [2] 19/13 111/18 there's [61] 4/14 6/2 8/10 18/13 19/22 surface [1] 43/10 terminal [2] 17/14 42/3 21/12 22/11 23/1 26/4 26/10 26/12 26/13 surprise [1] 63/14 terminology [1] 32/23 26/17 27/9 28/21 28/23 29/1 29/2 29/5 29/6 surrounding [2] 13/24 83/18 terms [1] 60/9 35/16 36/12 37/1 37/19 39/17 39/17 40/9 survey [14] 18/19 35/11 35/12 35/25 36/6 36/6 131/14 131/15 132/5 132/7 133/18 test [1] 14/9 43/3 43/16 46/25 49/25 53/22 65/15 74/13 testified [3] 13/22 120/5 131/12 81/11 81/19 82/3 84/18 88/9 88/19 89/6 testifies [2] 27/18 33/7 91/5 92/13 101/14 101/16 102/2 103/4 135/17 136/2 141/3 testify [20] 4/13 5/10 5/11 13/13 14/8 15/2 104/3 104/11 106/2 107/22 115/19 116/11 surveyed [1] 90/13 surveying [7] 25/12 30/24 103/23 136/4 15/3 24/17 26/19 27/4 56/22 56/23 57/2 116/22 116/25 119/15 119/18 119/22 123/10 132/16 147/1 136/16 137/6 142/4 58/23 81/23 82/1 102/13 119/9 126/12 surveyor [4] 21/22 62/2 136/5 136/24 128/15 therefore [2] 10/8 11/24 surveyor's [1] 77/20 surveyors [8] 24/16 30/25 105/3 133/20 testifying [6] 8/3 13/19 19/22 43/25 67/7 these [27] 11/20 13/16 13/18 14/1 15/18 96/17 19/19 24/20 26/20 26/21 27/4 33/21 36/15 136/3 136/4 136/8 136/23 testimony [25] 2/10 2/15 3/20 4/19 4/22 47/8 52/11 56/3 56/4 56/22 61/25 77/25 sustain [8] 43/5 43/24 51/1 57/14 81/13 10/7 13/4 13/6 13/8 13/20 13/25 14/2 14/3 80/5 98/2 123/4 124/19 146/13 146/22 85/20 94/3 120/24 14/5 14/12 14/14 14/15 14/21 15/25 20/2 146/25 150/17 sustained [5] 12/20 52/1 65/16 76/13 81/7 23/11 26/4 82/5 96/14 127/9 they [172] they'd [3] 32/18 32/18 143/1 they'll [5] 25/2 25/6 29/17 30/3 31/1 swail [1] 4/6 tests [3] 13/17 13/18 14/1 swimming [1] 45/4 than [25] 4/9 6/12 6/20 14/25 18/7 18/25 swimmingly [1] 29/14 24/7 25/1 29/9 36/17 44/11 58/12 60/11 they're [26] 6/15 7/4 7/10 7/12 9/10 26/16 switched [1] 144/25 61/9 63/25 76/19 89/12 94/23 106/22 118/2 26/23 27/11 27/12 29/13 29/18 33/8 35/25 sworn [3] 37/11 48/7 66/17 118/8 121/2 147/14 149/1 151/3 36/7 36/7 58/15 58/17 69/20 70/1 73/22 Sylvania [2] 69/6 69/20 Thank [49] 7/15 16/4 20/6 27/24 27/25 73/23 75/19 98/8 103/1 103/9 130/4 thick [1] 102/4 thicker [1] 78/11 thickly [1] 19/20 sýmpathy [1] 11/17 system [8] 33/10 33/14 84/3 84/4 85/4 28/2 31/25 37/6 37/7 37/9 42/6 44/15 44/17 47/18 47/21 48/5 54/10 55/20 56/16 59/13 87/20 121/21 138/9 60/15 60/16 60/18 65/25 66/13 66/14 71/5 system's [1] 43/10 71/22 72/22 77/17 80/13 82/24 83/1 94/11 thing [9] 10/1 22/9 22/10 30/4 30/5 34/13 systems [1] 85/13 95/22 96/7 96/9 97/22 108/15 121/6 126/17 65/13 111/18 132/11 things [12] 6/10 13/21 17/24 53/5 70/4 126/19 130/24 132/3 137/20 143/25 149/12 149/14 152/10 82/8 84/20 98/18 127/13 130/16 134/17 table [3] 6/20 6/23 110/11 Thanks [2] 65/1 89/14 143/9 Tad [1] 81/3 think [52] 5/22 6/25 20/24 22/1 23/20 that [738] take [31] 36/15 38/8 43/2 50/19 52/4 52/5 that's [110] 3/11 5/19 7/17 16/20 16/20 27/10 27/11 27/23 32/15 35/8 35/23 35/25 52/13 53/9 56/10 59/25 71/7 73/20 73/21 17/8 17/19 20/9 20/13 21/11 21/18 24/17 50/25 52/7 54/8 56/9 56/12 60/14 63/8 67/17 68/19 71/14 79/9 81/22 82/16 85/9 77/5 81/13 82/18 82/20 83/3 83/10 89/14 25/13 27/13 28/21 31/1 31/6 31/22 32/14 91/9 95/23 120/11 127/4 127/6 127/8 33/6 33/6 34/12 34/24 35/13 36/3 36/25 92/7 92/17 94/21 100/9 100/9 100/18 37/23 38/17 39/12 40/5 40/18 40/22 40/23 127/11 137/19 150/14 150/14 152/4 101/25 102/2 102/2 111/7 111/8 113/22 taken [19] 13/6 16/23 17/3 18/14 24/5 39/8 40/25 41/1 41/14 44/1 45/4 45/8 46/7 46/12 113/23 114/2 115/2 117/25 119/8 122/10 39/21 52/14 54/7 54/8 55/18 55/19 56/4 47/4 47/14 47/17 48/21 51/25 54/1 54/16 124/8 124/13 125/8 126/3 139/1 144/16 57/2 57/3 57/3 70/17 82/25 89/18 55/17 56/1 56/7 57/22 58/10 61/3 61/12 144/16 150/3 takes [1] 152/7 62/3 62/14 62/20 63/20 65/6 65/16 65/22 thinking [1] 111/4 taking [5] 2/18 2/25 3/1 22/10 25/22 67/1 76/9 80/5 81/7 81/12 82/4 82/11 86/2 thinks [2] 81/24 92/11 talk [10] 19/23 25/13 25/16 30/2 33/18 86/15 88/22 89/20 90/5 92/9 98/1 99/4 third [7] 19/17 39/20 58/2 61/6 110/7 81/1 102/7 102/7 106/21 141/13 100/8 100/10 100/20 101/1 102/13 104/17 113/6 138/11 talked [1] 81/3 106/4 106/11 106/14 106/20 107/13 107/16 Thirty [1] 87/14 talking [11] 35/24 49/18 67/25 82/9 100/24 107/18 109/5 109/11 109/15 109/17 111/4 this [226] 112/3 117/18 118/10 118/13 124/19 137/24 117/2 119/1 120/11 122/5 123/1 123/16 Thomas [1] 66/23 talks [3] 18/17 121/11 136/3 124/13 126/8 126/11 131/16 131/24 131/25 those [49] 2/21 4/18 8/10 9/2 9/16 9/23 tall [2] 19/9 49/22 133/25 138/4 142/1 10/22 16/15 18/18 21/13 34/4 34/5 35/12 35/16 36/1 36/5 36/16 60/4 62/25 63/1 tandem [1] 35/2 their [46] 4/1 6/11 9/15 11/7 12/6 15/20 tank [4] 41/21 41/23 46/21 86/4 21/3 23/12 25/3 26/15 27/12 30/10 31/3 63/18 65/12 70/25 77/11 90/6 91/6 96/1 tanks [2] 42/1 121/18 31/7 32/17 33/4 33/5 33/10 33/10 33/22 102/25 103/1 103/7 103/8 110/6 110/19 task [1] 126/9 34/16 36/13 36/20 53/4 61/8 63/18 63/24 114/18 115/5 115/9 119/25 120/2 120/6

Case: 3:06-cv-02950-JZ Doc #3/4239/4 52/14eq46/191/24/08 171 o tracks [32] 17/3 22/16 33/22 33/24 33/25 those... [10] 121/3 121/13 121/16 123/21 37/19 37/20 39/3 40/1 42/3 52/16 59/18 123/25 124/10 128/10 129/5 129/8 145/8 63/18 64/2 64/7 71/15 71/16 73/18 74/25 though [9] 7/10 9/3 62/18 64/13 99/4 75/5 76/4 76/24 78/12 79/8 90/22 92/19 103/23 105/25 112/10 145/6 92/19 93/14 95/10 95/11 111/6 146/18 thought [12] 27/16 66/5 68/3 83/12 98/15 tradesman [1] 83/14 107/13 108/4 113/21 150/7 150/8 150/9 trail [1] 28/15 train [25] 27/1 28/25 29/14 29/15 29/24 thoughts [1] 129/14 29/24 30/7 30/12 30/13 30/15 40/24 43/20 thousand [1] 137/5 44/4 62/15 64/11 71/14 104/7 115/12 three [20] 6/22 20/18 22/4 30/25 30/25 115/16 115/17 115/23 116/4 116/13 116/19 33/20 36/11 37/21 38/24 41/23 58/6 66/6 116/25 98/24 102/3 110/24 111/5 113/2 113/10 trains [14] 30/10 30/14 30/16 49/24 58/12 113/25 114/17 58/14 58/16 60/10 64/11 71/17 76/5 92/20 through [16] 4/21 14/23 22/6 30/18 46/20 104/7 115/19 46/23 65/11 70/7 89/4 115/9 116/13 131/22 transcript [6] 1/10 1/23 13/5 96/17 97/19 139/6 142/5 142/7 144/8 153/3 throughout [1] 124/6 transit [2] 142/7 142/16 tie [1] 25/7 tied [1] 23/24 tree [14] 20/20 29/22 29/23 36/23 36/24 university [1] 142/13 38/20 38/20 62/5 70/18 95/18 95/25 102/19 unless [2] 43/3 82/3 tight [4] 32/3 32/9 32/14 32/20 134/22 144/2 tile [6] 22/23 23/22 23/23 23/24 33/17 75/3 trees [83] 3/25 15/4 17/4 17/12 19/9 19/11 time [43] 3/5 3/8 3/8 5/11 14/18 22/6 23/5 21/13 22/2 26/20 28/23 28/25 29/1 29/1 27/18 34/2 36/2 46/8 49/24 49/24 50/19 30/7 36/16 39/17 49/12 49/20 49/21 49/22 55/4 60/3 61/10 64/8 66/8 67/7 67/23 69/16 49/25 49/25 50/1 50/2 50/15 50/23 51/4 52/11 55/6 56/7 58/12 59/5 60/4 60/5 60/6 70/9 71/7 103/13 119/3 120/12 122/18 133/6 140/9 144/5 144/6 144/6 144/10 62/1 62/10 62/18 62/21 62/25 63/1 63/14 144/16 144/18 147/4 148/7 148/10 149/9 65/7 65/23 65/24 66/8 70/22 70/23 71/1 149/16 149/19 152/4 71/10 71/16 76/3 76/21 77/25 78/1 78/10 times [5] 73/15 76/19 129/4 129/22 144/2 79/25 89/15 92/3 93/9 95/12 102/17 102/21 Timing [1] 111/12 102/24 102/25 103/2 103/2 103/5 104/3 title [2] 67/22 67/22 104/8 104/20 106/16 124/3 124/6 124/21 TNS [3] 70/11 80/24 81/1 131/4 132/9 132/14 133/8 135/6 135/10 today [31] 9/17 9/18 10/1 16/21 24/18 139/13 146/21 26/24 27/13 27/24 33/7 41/3 49/23 54/5 trench [4] 24/24 25/1 25/3 32/8 55/10 57/19 57/20 75/7 76/8 76/17 79/7 trenching [1] 87/25 91/24 96/18 110/17 111/1 111/3 116/14 trespass [4] 25/21 29/17 34/15 34/25 118/7 118/14 124/2 125/15 128/4 140/24 trespassed [3] 27/11 29/12 34/15 trial [20] 1/7 1/10 3/12 6/7 7/16 7/19 9/12 Todd [1] 126/1 together [3] 9/15 13/24 22/25 10/8 10/22 11/6 11/10 13/4 13/7 15/24 toilet [1] 34/1 15/25 16/1 16/6 20/5 25/24 56/19 told [12] 30/19 42/14 43/22 43/25 65/17 tried [1] 130/15 97/10 98/5 123/1 131/12 135/24 147/4 tripping [2] 108/7 137/18 Triskel [1] 44/25 trivial [1] 14/22 truck [2] 35/2 35/2 Toledo [42] 1/5 1/7 1/21 17/13 17/21 18/2 18/7 18/9 18/15 18/22 19/8 19/17 25/21 28/4 28/13 28/14 28/20 37/4 44/23 60/24 trucks [2] 35/3 143/2 true [24] 10/23 10/24 28/16 47/14 62/14 93/18 94/7 127/23 132/8 135/4 135/16 136/16 136/24 137/3 138/6 138/16 138/20 65/21 129/3 129/7 129/10 133/15 135/1 139/2 139/3 139/3 139/10 139/12 139/15 135/8 135/9 135/16 135/18 135/20 135/21 139/20 139/22 146/23 148/23 137/7 137/8 138/1 138/4 138/5 139/19 Toledo's [1] 34/19 151/17 Tom [3] 66/21 88/14 121/11 truly [2] 24/17 54/19 tomorrow [2] 10/1 16/22 truth [3] 16/6 97/2 99/4 truthfulness [1] 13/17 tons [2] 35/9 35/9 try [5] 24/8 28/21 54/14 94/18 122/18 too [3] 34/13 54/19 121/22 took [19] 17/5 21/25 22/21 23/9 23/24 tryers [1] 15/10 28/20 54/24 56/3 56/12 56/22 83/11 95/18 trying [6] 72/1 107/23 112/20 129/24 132/2 140/22 95/23 111/11 119/4 134/23 142/5 151/17 Tuesday [1] 9/18 top [5] 38/25 76/5 78/7 78/11 150/19 turn [1] 10/20 topographical [1] 88/18 turnpike [1] 17/7 topography [1] 4/8 two [27] 2/19 3/7 5/20 5/23 14/19 17/12 total [6] 18/9 20/11 26/10 27/7 91/2 91/15 26/9 34/3 38/3 49/25 63/8 63/8 63/9 63/12 totally [2] 143/12 143/14 69/5 70/22 70/25 71/16 75/4 109/14 109/19 verb [1] 94/19 touching [4] 33/22 36/6 36/7 63/24 111/7 118/24 129/20 138/9 143/12 151/22 toward [3] 3/14 11/18 56/15 two-and-a-half [1] 118/24 two-minute [1] 3/7 towards [17] 4/6 35/5 38/19 39/2 39/13 39/25 40/3 44/4 46/4 47/12 75/11 79/8 type [9] 19/3 22/9 25/17 50/12 50/14 89/17 93/18 102/3 117/16 143/5 145/4 112/4 130/10 132/24 town [1] 123/11 typed [1] 13/7 Township [3] 18/5 107/10 121/12 typically [2] 47/11 102/17 track [9] 17/14 17/15 17/19 17/20 17/20

173. PageID #: 2957

U.T [1] 142/5 Uh [3] 70/19 142/11 150/2 Uh-huh [3] 70/19 142/11 150/2 unactive [1] 17/20 unaware [1] 120/17 under [18] 9/2 13/7 14/4 25/4 26/13 28/14 29/6 32/24 33/12 42/3 82/7 86/1 86/4 87/21 89/6 96/25 110/11 110/13 underground [1] 34/17 underneath [2] 23/23 146/18 understand [13] 18/9 27/24 57/1 59/25 100/13 108/8 109/18 115/25 125/11 127/17 130/2 135/11 148/5 understanding [2] 7/13 9/15 understands [1] 84/4 undisputed [1] 22/1 UNITED [3] 1/1 1/11 25/22 unloading [1] 144/17 unquote [1] 6/20 until [5] 5/11 19/18 56/6 68/12 140/24 unusual [1] 33/11 up [67] 3/6 8/10 8/22 8/23 10/18 13/7 16/12 16/13 16/15 17/5 19/18 20/24 21/5 21/11 23/21 24/2 24/4 24/10 25/4 26/23 27/2 27/10 28/22 30/8 36/11 38/17 38/20 41/3 46/9 50/5 52/6 52/16 53/12 54/22 55/22 55/23 58/8 60/4 63/18 66/25 67/12 68/12 69/6 70/20 71/8 75/1 75/9 76/3 79/22 84/15 84/21 100/20 110/16 114/14 116/17 116/18 123/13 123/17 127/13 133/15 135/25 136/4 136/7 136/11 139/2 139/10 150/16 uphill [1] 151/9 uphold [1] 111/22 upon [7] 37/10 48/6 66/16 90/19 106/9 126/12 127/2 upscale [2] 68/5 72/10 urban [1] 17/15 us [22] 16/17 25/24 26/1 26/2 38/4 44/3 75/12 77/19 77/24 79/5 82/22 92/7 94/5 111/11 111/15 114/13 119/14 121/18 124/12 136/4 147/4 152/7 use [11] 8/8 13/7 16/16 27/14 32/20 82/18 94/13 94/16 94/19 97/17 147/6 used [10] 42/17 45/20 52/17 52/18 53/1 58/13 67/10 102/9 147/3 150/19 using [3] 8/9 25/23 76/7 usually [1] 145/11 utilities [5] 69/15 69/16 70/4 86/5 89/6

vacant [2] 68/2 69/11 value [19] 11/16 19/6 21/14 23/17 26/21 27/3 27/8 49/13 57/23 58/3 58/4 60/8 60/12 60/12 61/16 65/8 81/23 82/1 133/9 various [1] 36/9 varying [1] 11/22 vegetation [6] 15/4 41/4 102/4 104/8 104/15 104/19 vehicle [3] 19/4 132/25 133/23 venture [1] 18/8 verbal [1] 3/23 verdict [1] 11/13 Vermillion [3] 20/16 31/11 31/19 very [26] 8/6 8/6 16/24 16/24 20/17 20/18 27/3 40/6 41/4 49/11 49/13 49/21 49/21 50/18 52/12 58/17 61/14 64/12 65/25 94/11 101/17 102/19 102/25 104/2 108/8 108/15 video [4] 13/6 18/14 18/15 29/20

## videotape [1] 29/22 view [9] 2/4 2/6 20/14 24/8 36/10 39/24 43/4 76/8 92/11 views [1] 29/2 vigorous [1] 3/10 village [2] 111/17 111/17 villas [1] 69/9 violated [1] 25/22

visible [6] 25/18 58/15 58/17 60/10 79/12

90/16 voice [1] 28/22 VOLUME [1] 1/10

virtually [1] 102/21

W.W [4] 4/9 17/11 19/16 101/22 wait [3] 20/4 24/10 56/14 Wake [1] 30/8 walk [5] 30/18 75/16 75/18 75/19 134/9 walk-out [3] 75/16 75/18 75/19 walked [1] 75/21 walking [3] 18/17 30/15 53/4 wall [2] 29/23 116/23 walnut [2] 36/23 36/24 want [17] 2/7 3/4 7/12 16/14 36/3 44/16 52/5 77/5 88/23 89/14 91/9 112/6 117/8 129/15 135/9 145/13 150/7 wanted [2] 124/21 127/13 wants [1] 8/18 warning [1] 3/7 Warren [2] 128/9 128/12 was [380] wasn't [24] 7/20 22/4 29/23 30/13 56/6 57/1 69/14 93/11 103/6 103/13 103/18 103/20 105/15 105/18 114/20 119/4 119/24 120/15 120/21 134/6 147/12 150/17 150/25 151/3 watch [1] 50/11 watching [1] 50/13 water [119] 3/24 4/2 4/6 4/10 4/13 17/22 18/5 18/11 22/15 22/19 22/21 22/22 22/24 23/5 23/7 23/9 23/12 23/23 24/1 24/2 24/22 24/23 28/12 28/16 33/1 33/5 33/8 33/12 34/7 34/8 34/10 34/21 34/22 37/18 39/14 42/8 42/19 43/10 43/14 44/11 45/7 46/18 47/2 47/7 47/9 47/11 67/11 69/19 69/21 73/16 73/23 74/1 74/7 74/16 74/23 76/18 76/24 80/4 84/5 84/6 84/8 84/15 85/3 87/21 89/7 90/14 111/8 111/9 111/16 111/16 111/20 111/20 112/3 112/4 112/6 119/6 119/11 119/15 119/18 119/22 119/25 120/6 120/13 121/3 121/25 122/1 122/2 122/4 122/16 122/20 128/1 137/4 138/3 138/5 138/6 138/8 138/11 138/15 138/16 138/20 139/10 139/14 140/13 142/21 145/14 146/4 147/21 147/25 148/4 148/5 148/8 148/11 148/14 148/20 148/22 148/25 150/20 151/8 151/11 water's [3] 23/3 47/3 73/19 Waterville [4] 67/1 107/9 107/10 121/12 way [40] 17/1 17/6 17/18 21/17 22/5 24/3 25/11 28/13 29/4 29/21 30/1 30/12 30/21 31/11 32/5 32/24 34/10 35/1 39/4 41/12 45/17 50/15 51/23 52/6 57/13 58/20 63/24 65/9 75/4 88/13 89/8 89/9 95/11 111/19 134/4 134/15 134/24 142/25 145/16 145/24 Wayne [2] 28/15 67/3 ways [1] 11/22 we [156] we'll [9] 20/4 41/9 43/19 82/20 85/20 105/5 115/8 127/8 152/4 we're [18] 9/24 10/17 10/18 15/17 16/21

Case: 3:06-cv-02950-JZ DO¢ 17/2637/1321/9/6:27/24/36/25/39/12/64/12 67/10 97/20 117/18 130/2 137/24 152/9 we've [9] 38/7 40/14 41/10 54/12 58/7 89/25 92/21 131/18 146/12 wealthy [1] 16/25 weeds [2] 29/3 100/4 week [6] 2/14 4/24 9/14 10/4 140/7 140/8 weight [3] 14/2 14/10 15/12 welcome [1] 8/12 well [65] 2/13 2/17 6/11 6/21 7/7 7/8 8/10 8/22 9/7 9/11 16/11 18/13 21/5 23/23 28/7 34/13 42/22 43/3 43/7 43/18 43/20 46/20 47/4 49/15 50/10 56/24 57/4 57/22 57/25 60/3 61/10 61/14 65/9 65/21 68/11 69/12 69/15 71/2 72/14 78/22 79/7 85/11 92/13 94/1 95/7 97/12 98/12 101/9 101/11 101/1 103/1 103/17 107/6 108/1 110/14 112/15 113/13 114/4 116/16 119/21 120/18 129/11 129/19 129/19 151/14 wells [1] 111/19 went [29] 21/19 22/1 24/12 29/14 30/20 31/8 32/17 32/24 33/12 34/1 41/2 42/8 42/8 Whitehouse [3] 84/2 86/20 87/8 42/10 45/16 67/3 67/19 68/7 68/11 70/7 70/13 89/4 110/11 110/13 132/23 136/24 145/3 148/11 151/15 were [132] 3/25 6/21 6/22 8/20 9/16 9/17 13/10 15/4 19/9 19/19 20/22 21/10 21/18 22/20 24/5 24/15 25/21 26/9 26/20 26/21 26/22 27/15 28/23 28/25 29/1 29/3 30/7 32/16 33/15 33/23 34/7 35/10 35/13 35/17 36/1 36/2 36/16 36/17 38/11 40/18 41/7 42/2 42/15 44/9 49/12 49/21 50/2 53/4 56/4 57/2 57/25 58/12 61/11 62/10 62/11 62/21 66/8 69/7 69/8 69/9 69/15 70/8 72/3 72/4 72/23 72/23 73/3 73/15 76/21 76/23 76/25 77/25 78/9 78/13 78/25 79/18 82/12 83/14 89/15 91/6 91/8 92/17 92/17 93/17 95/18 96/2 96/25 99/10 102/21 103/2 103/2 103/9 104/2 106/13 106/16 113/2 113/2 113/15 114/3 116/1 116/10 116/12 117/9 119/2 120/2 120/16 122/6 124/3 127/20 128/10 129/8 129/24 130/11 130/18 133/5 133/24 135/21 135/25 136/11 139/5 139/13 140/5 140/9 140/19 140/21 142/14 142/22 143/2 144/3 146/13 146/16 148/2 weren't [4] 36/7 62/18 112/15 124/4 WESTERN [1] 1/2 wetlands [2] 2/8 2/9 what [203] what's [15] 16/7 16/20 20/14 23/4 23/8 38/23 56/8 72/11 73/16 76/16 78/12 90/23 92/16 101/24 143/19 whatever [3] 46/23 106/2 136/19 whatsoever [2] 35/16 97/13 when [106] 5/16 8/3 8/7 16/10 17/14 20/8 20/12 20/22 21/6 22/6 22/20 23/4 24/2 26/20 27/18 30/2 30/2 30/6 31/2 33/18 35/13 36/3 36/25 39/21 40/18 42/15 46/2 46/10 46/10 49/16 49/21 50/2 53/16 54/7 55/6 55/18 57/2 57/3 60/25 63/1 63/9 64/19 within [5] 24/4 59/6 61/11 80/9 135/4 79/18 83/14 85/23 90/13 90/24 91/25 94/13 97/17 98/12 99/11 101/11 102/7 102/7 102/10 105/2 111/12 111/25 115/3 115/6 116/17 117/6 117/9 118/21 119/24 121/11 122/6 123/4 123/6 124/2 127/7 127/12 128/18 128/18 128/22 133/14 133/24 134/4 134/22 136/2 137/23 139/9 140/15 142/22 142/24 143/2 143/9 144/6 144/10 144/25 146/1 146/9 146/22 147/2 147/6 149/4 150/5 150/16 whenever [1] 33/7 where [58] 4/13 6/15 6/25 15/9 17/5 19/4 20/3 21/18 22/15 22/19 23/3 23/21 24/15

37/16 37/18 42/8 46/20 47/5 47/25 48/12 51/20 52/16 52/23 59/10 62/7 63/1 64/21 66/22 70/1 74/7 74/16 74/23 75/4 86/13 86/15 88/14 90/19 92/22 101/19 103/7 110/3 124/9 135/25 136/11 147/2 147/12 147/21 148/11 151/11 151/12 151/15 whether [9] 13/15 14/21 16/7 20/1 109/18 132/22 134/7 137/6 141/4 which [42] 3/22 4/4 9/20 10/17 10/19 11/12 12/7 13/14 13/21 15/10 16/24 17/5 18/14 18/23 19/14 19/19 20/16 23/9 26/11 26/24 30/14 30/15 31/10 32/2 40/6 40/11 48/4 51/12 55/14 60/4 82/22 86/2 90/10 111/6 121/11 124/2 127/7 139/23 144/22 145/3 146/5 152/7 while [4] 92/1 111/11 142/14 142/15 whistle [6] 30/10 30/11 64/19 64/21 64/25 115/13 whistleblowing [1] 64/24 White [2] 17/6 145/4 who [34] 4/20 5/13 6/9 6/19 10/22 13/13 13/14 14/8 14/19 14/23 19/16 24/12 25/15 40/15 43/22 56/3 56/21 65/10 72/3 78/1 90/6 95/23 112/18 113/5 126/12 128/4 128/8 128/24 132/12 135/2 135/3 141/14 146/7 149/3 who's [1] 5/9 whoever [1] 45/9 whole [10] 12/2 24/3 43/20 45/20 80/24 82/12 124/14 124/14 137/8 137/12 whom [1] 141/12 why [52] 26/5 27/13 27/24 30/14 33/20 35/8 44/24 45/3 53/22 64/4 64/6 66/11 73/21 75/17 79/21 81/12 82/18 92/11 92/14 93/5 97/6 98/2 98/7 98/20 98/24 99/16 99/17 99/18 99/19 99/21 103/17 103/20 106/11 106/14 110/22 110/24 112/20 113/20 119/9 119/12 119/13 119/13 119/16 119/17 119/20 121/15 122/20 123/8 129/11 137/22 146/23 152/8 wide [2] 20/9 20/14 wife [5] 49/4 64/5 67/4 67/21 67/25 will [65] 2/5 2/11 2/12 2/16 2/21 2/22 3/6 5/8 8/2 8/2 9/20 11/4 11/8 11/12 11/21 12/8 12/15 12/16 12/20 13/13 13/16 14/1 15/20 15/24 15/25 17/11 18/19 20/1 20/2 21/9 21/10 23/11 24/24 27/19 27/22 27/23 29/19 30/1 30/6 30/17 30/23 31/7 31/9 31/10 31/12 32/1 33/2 35/20 35/21 36/8 37/1 39/14 43/5 52/1 59/1 61/8 65/16 81/17 126/12 126/13 127/11 135/9 136/9 138/10 142/18 willing [1] 64/9 window [1] 39/2 winter [2] 39/9 39/22 wise [1] 41/4 withdrew [1] 9/9 67/15 68/16 69/11 74/13 75/21 76/23 78/13 without [10] 4/24 12/17 29/17 34/18 34/19 34/25 35/4 58/15 107/20 149/25 witness [32] 10/4 10/10 11/18 13/10 13/16 13/18 14/2 14/4 14/6 14/12 14/16 14/19 14/23 19/22 30/3 37/8 47/23 50/22 50/23 66/15 82/13 94/16 97/18 108/12 108/12 119/17 126/20 127/11 137/19 149/10 149/12 150/15 witness' [2] 10/7 14/14 witnesses [16] 5/7 5/7 5/9 5/13 5/14 7/10 7/12 10/24 12/10 13/13 14/8 14/11 15/11 15/14 127/10 130/3 woah [2] 50/19 50/19 woke [1] 58/8

24/16 24/18 28/25 29/4-34/91 35/7 36/8

173 Case: 3:06-cv-02950-J2 Do¢ 33;2€3\$93 56/₽₽66/24€3/260\$2/2173 of 173. PageID #: 2959 wondering [1] 54/17 wood [26] 17/22 18/2 18/3 18/6 18/11 23/1 28/16 35/25 105/10 105/20 106/6 123/18 125/14 138/7 138/17 138/21 138/23 138/23 139/1 139/4 139/8 139/21 145/15 145/22 146/8 146/14 wooded [1] 103/8 Woodlands [1] 1/15 woods [1] 39/15 word [3] 94/13 94/16 94/21 work [21] 9/23 30/13 67/22 93/15 115/14 115/17 115/20 116/2 116/15 116/16 119/7 120/14 120/22 121/4 123/10 123/13 123/14 130/10 136/17 147/3 147/7 working [4] 10/17 16/10 80/15 123/12 world [3] 110/25 111/3 113/22 worse [4] 33/9 36/10 76/19 119/19 worth [6] 26/23 27/4 36/17 36/18 58/9 58/9 worthy [1] 15/10 would [117] 3/20 3/20 4/15 5/1 5/22 6/18 6/19 7/2 8/11 9/16 9/22 15/23 26/2 34/21 37/15 38/15 40/20 41/18 45/6 45/9 45/13 45/23 46/1 46/18 46/23 47/11 48/11 49/7 51/11 51/19 55/14 55/15 56/21 57/18 58/22 59/7 59/16 60/5 60/14 62/17 63/14 64/8 66/21 66/24 67/13 68/4 71/10 71/11 72/11 73/1 73/12 74/22 78/2 78/17 80/6 81/4 82/12 82/21 83/19 85/7 86/1 86/4 86/7 86/13 86/15 86/15 86/23 87/20 88/11 88/13 88/19 88/25 89/5 89/9 90/8 91/11 91/13 94/5 94/21 94/25 97/5 103/16 104/1 104/9 104/17 104/19 105/20 112/18 115/8 115/12 115/16 115/19 116/11 119/13 119/16 119/17 119/20 121/18 123/8 124/12 125/23 126/3 127/1 127/19 135/9 136/25 139/9 143/7 143/7 144/7 144/12 147/7 150/22 150/23 151/11 151/12 152/5 wouldn't [11] 18/24 58/16 82/6 104/10 104/10 111/7 112/20 114/23 121/17 121/18 122/22 wound [2] 8/22 8/23 written [2] 3/23 13/5 wrong [6] 31/8 82/15 118/5 118/8 141/3

141/7

yard [1] 76/8 yards [4] 102/25 116/11 116/11 116/12 yeah [28] 30/8 30/8 40/1 47/17 52/12 52/23 52/25 53/19 54/1 61/18 68/6 68/15 77/10 88/18 90/3 90/9 98/14 98/15 99/10 100/1 102/18 104/12 104/14 108/22 110/15 114/12 117/9 117/15 year [10] 33/13 33/14 33/15 50/10 61/2 98/12 98/12 98/15 98/17 123/11 years [26] 6/24 17/16 19/10 33/3 33/20 40/21 46/15 48/23 49/6 58/6 61/1 63/10 63/12 66/6 67/2 68/12 68/14 98/24 102/10 102/11 107/24 110/20 118/24 119/10 122/4 151/22 yes [211] yesterday [21] 2/4 3/5 7/20 7/24 8/21 9/5 15/22 16/19 20/22 21/18 22/12 23/22 24/13 26/25 28/25 30/12 30/15 30/18 32/16 34/8 35/12 yet [4] 2/2 20/2 35/21 112/12 you [805] you'd [5] 62/14 62/14 106/8 114/21 116/10 you'll [25] 10/18 20/7 20/11 20/12 20/13 21/7 21/20 27/14 29/2 29/21 29/25 30/2 30/9 32/3 32/10 32/23 33/3 33/9 33/18

you're [50] 8/11 18/16 19/13 24/10 30/25 32/6 37/21 38/17 38/19 39/24 40/3 41/15 46/3 49/18 61/24 61/25 62/2 64/10 66/24 67/10 71/7 82/1 83/8 88/12 89/3 93/5 97/17 100/13 102/14 102/14 103/7 103/14 103/23 104/14 106/12 108/7 111/12 111/25 112/2 115/13 116/17 116/22 117/3 119/12 124/19 131/16 138/12 141/2 141/6 150/10 you've [16] 8/14 20/11 32/7 32/7 32/8 32/8 41/11 47/13 66/25 71/8 80/21 85/17 98/20 107/23 123/19 140/24 young [1] 40/18 Youngstown [1] 83/17 your [151] 3/8 3/10 3/13 3/13 3/17 3/19 5/13 5/14 5/16 5/21 6/5 6/14 7/3 10/18 11/3 11/14 11/17 12/10 12/15 12/16 13/17 16/1 16/4 19/21 19/21 20/6 27/14 27/21 28/2 31/22 31/25 35/15 36/23 37/9 37/16 38/4 39/15 40/1 40/22 41/5 42/4 43/2 43/15 43/16 44/10 44/10 44/10 44/12 44/17 45/6 45/10 46/3 46/10 46/10 47/24 48/19 49/16 50/17 50/21 51/13 51/20 52/4 52/19 53/10 53/22 54/9 54/25 55/7 56/5 56/15 56/24 58/21 59/19 59/21 61/19 61/21 65/8 65/19 65/20 66/22 67/7 68/7 71/7 71/24 72/21 73/17 73/24 77/15 77/24 79/13 80/10 81/11 81/16 81/22 82/6 82/13 82/17 82/23 82/24 83/1 84/18 85/19 86/24 90/11 90/18 91/10 92/3 93/3 93/6 93/8 93/24 94/8 94/10 96/5 96/9 102/12 103/17 103/20 108/14 118/10 123/1 124/17 125/3 125/11 126/9 126/21 127/7 127/11 127/22 129/8 129/17 129/25 130/1 130/20 132/13 132/23 133/23 134/9 134/20 140/9 140/17 141/19 141/22 142/2 143/11 143/21 146/4 149/5 150/11 150/13 152/2 Yours [1] 54/19 yourself [5] 37/15 48/11 66/21 141/25 142/4

zero [3] 8/16 63/15 64/1 zoning [1] 70/7 ZOUHARY [1] 1/10

yourselves [2] 15/8 15/13